



GMOS, CONSUMERISM and the GLOBAL POLITICS of BIOTECHNOLOGY

Rethinking Food, Bodies and Identities in Africa's 21st Century

Munyaradzi Mawere & Artwell Nhemachena



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**GMOs, Consumerism and
the Global Politics of
Biotechnology:**
Rethinking Food, Bodies and
Identities in Africa's 21st Century

**Edited by
Munyaradzi Mawere &
Artwell Nhemachena**



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Consuming or Being Consumed in the New World Order? GMOs as an Insult to the Dispossessed and Impoverished of the Earth

Artwell Nhemachena & Munyaradzi Mawere

My grandmother was captured in Africa when she was a little girl. A big boat was down at the edge of a bay an' the people was all excited about it an' some of the bravest went up purty close to look at it. The men on the boat told them to come on board and they could have the pretty red handkerchiefs, red and blue beads and big rings. A lot of them went on board and the ship sailed away with them. My grandmother never saw any of her folks again (Martha King, enslaved in Virginia and Alabama, interviewed in Oklaboma, ca. 1937 cited in National Humanities Center, 2009: 1).

Folks on the beach started to crying and shouting. The ones on the boat was wild with fear. Grandmother was one of them who got fooled, and she say the last thing seen of that place was the natives running up and down the beach waving their arms and shouting like they was mad. The boatmen came up from below where they had been hiding and drive the slaves down in the bottom and keep them quite with the whips and clubs (Charley Barber, enslaved and interviewed in South Carolina, ca. 1937, cited in National Humanities Center, 2009: 1).

Between 1963 and 1965 more than 400, 000 Colombian women were sterilized in a program funded by the Rockefeller Foundation in Bolivia, a U.S imposed population control program administered by the Peace Corps sterilized Quechua women without their knowledge or consent...It is no coincidence that in 1972 the Rockefeller Foundation, the Rockefeller's Population Council, the World Bank, CGLAR, and the U.S. National Institute of Health were involved in a twenty-year project to produce a hidden abortion vaccine for the World Health Organisation. The 1974 document, "National Security Study Memorandum 200, lists the Philippines, and other nations, as a target for population control under the guise of United Nations aid programs" (Tucker, n.d: 77).

Introduction

When Westerners and North Americans continue to come to Africa in the guise of humanitarianism with food and clothes, the key question is how distinct are the apparently humanitarian interventions from the precedent baiting of Africans with cloths during the enslavement era? If, during the enslavement era, the Westerners and North Americans came with all sorts of cloths including handkerchiefs, red clothes, blue beads, bright rings and so on as means to entice Africans to get on board the slave ships before they were driven away; the question today is how different is this from the humanitarianism that is being used to get Africans on board the global spaceship that is manned and driven by the same Westerners and North Americans? The issue here is that in a world where historically, Africans have been captured and consumed, as the enslaved, such a world cannot suddenly and magically become a neutral global village without traces of the previous monsters. To us the descriptor “consumed” here is intended to underline the fact that Africans were not considered by the slave drivers and traders to be human beings; they were arrogantly considered to be animists and therefore indistinct from animals. In this sense the charity and benevolence of the masters cum monsters, could not constitute humanitarianism because the Africans to whom the “charity” was extended were not regarded as human beings. As underscored in the vignettes above, the cloths, beads and other items which Westerners and North Americans brought to Africans were not meant to serve humanitarian purposes but to operate as baits, much in the form of entrapping animals, to fool some Africans to get on board the slave ships. Thus, fascinated by the sizes of the ships, the brightness of the cloths, beads and so on some Africans did not realise that the big and bright items that struck their attention were made from Euro-American consuming of enslaved and hapless human beings that were first turned into and regarded as indistinct from animals.

While in the contemporary era, Africans consume a variety of forms of “humanitarian” aid, it is imperative for the Africans to consider not only the costs of such “humanitarian” aid but also the sincerity of it, particularly when it is construed within the context of

contemporary Western and North American angst to create and realise a “global village”. If in a village it is possible to have both human beings and animals then why must Africans be quick to join the celebration of the “global village” without first securing affirmation that they will be regarded as human beings and not animals in that village? If Africans have right from the enslavement era through to the colonial era being regarded as animals fit for carrying the burdens of empire, what guarantee is there that this time Africans will be treated as human beings in the “global village” that Westerners and North Americans envisage and hanker for? The danger is that if Africans continue to be regarded as indistinct from animals, joining the “global village” logically presupposes becoming domesticated with the attendant intensification of dispossession, exploitation, sacrifices and tragedies of being consumed by monsters hiding in the villages and pretending to be humanitarian. In this regard, the key indicator of malafides humanitarianism is the fact that such “humanitarianism” is extended to Africans while at the same time they are enjoined, as a conditionality to such humanitarianism, to ignore and indeed destroy their own human cultural, social, political, economic, moral and axiological fabrics. However, without their own human cultural, social, political, economic, moral and axiological fabrics, Africans are effectively turned into animals and this makes a façade of the purported contemporary “humanitarianism”. In fact, it makes it clear that the contemporary “humanitarianism” is a replication of the charity and benevolence that is extended to animals. Thus, if during the enslavement era, Africans were fooled, using enticements like [red] cloths, bright beads and so on, into getting on board the slave ships, today Africans are entrapped and enticed [via facades of humanitarianism] to get into the global spaceship in which Africans effectively constitute captured passengers.

Much as the boatmen [in the vignettes above] of the slave ships suddenly emerged with whips and clubs once the entrapped and enticed African enslaved were on board, today the boatmen of the global spaceship are hiding at the bottom of ideologies of philanthropy and humanitarianism and the recently constituted United Nations ‘responsibility to protect’. Further, the contemporary

concerns about the impending hardships arising from the New World Order's human culling agenda underscore the replications of logics of the enslavement era. Whereas boatmen of slave ships suddenly emerged once the enslaved were on board, with clubs and whips, today the architects of globalisation, "humanitarianism" and the emergent New World Order are emerging from their ideological hiding with declarations of the need to downsize the human population, cull the human "herd" via the introduction of diseases, wars and other tribulations. However, it is the dispossessed, exploited, captured Africans and other peoples of the global south who are the targets of the human culling exercises. So, it is a "global village" that feasts on those that it has not only dispossessed, captured and exploited but also on those that it has promised deliverance to a humanitarian world.

The human culling which some scholars like James Lovelock (2007) deceptively attribute to what they call Gaia is traceable to Thomas Malthus's (1798) work (see Kopnina *et al* 2016: 133) in which he argues that there are checks and balances, to population growth, emerging from difficulties of subsistence, including struggle for resources, disease and starvation. However, these checks are far from being natural since there is evidence that toxic substances are made and intentionally put in dietary products for the impoverished in the world to eat and die away. Substances which cause insanity, widespread infertility, organ damage and loss of ability to engage in rational, conscious thinking are doused into the food for the impoverished to eat (Natural News, 20 February 2014). It is noted about a chemical used on food crops thus:

Atrazine is widely documented as a powerful "chemical castrator" that transforms males into hermaphrodites, the animal kingdom version of a "metrosexual"...It is undoubtedly one of the chemicals currently responsible for the mass feminisation of men in modern society...atrazine reduced the size of the larynx...We also observed very low levels of testosterone among adults males; some of them were hermaphrodites, which means they had both ovaries and testes. In certain cases, the males became homosexuals and coupled with other males, adopting a feminised behaviour;

sometimes they had eggs in their testes instead of sperm (Natural News, 16 January 2017).

Although the United Nations and other Western states would present homosexuality as natural and therefore as a human right [presented as overriding rights to have conventional families] that children are now being taught about in schools worldwide (New American, 4 April 2017; Dice, 2010: 87), the above evidence shows that homosexuality is in fact manufactured in the food science laboratories of the transnational biotechnology and GMO producing corporations. In this vein, it is noted that a handful of global elites within the global secret society [that controls guns, oil, food, pharmaceuticals, media etc.], who intend to reduce world population from 7 billion to 500 million (Marrs, 2016) use chemicals to induce homosexuality. It is noted in the India Times (2 July 2016) that:

This power-house formed by 13 families is known to be controlling particularly everything around the globe from political parties around the world, courthouses, educational institutions, natural resources, foreign policies, food, national economies, media houses, even terrorist organisations. They are the ones who decide where the next terror attack is going to happen, they decide when the markets will fall, they decide when a new government needs to take over, they decide what happens at the UN, they decide practically everything.

Because the secret society controls everything, they use [biotechnological] science to produce chemicals inducing homosexuality and sterility and then they use the institutions such as the United Nations, which they fund and control, to normalise the homosexuality which they would have induced as a means of population control. The chemicals, including those that reverse sexes and feminise males; result in males having shortened penises and having low testosterone levels (Hood, 2005: 672; Strakosha, 2017; Ahearn, 2010), are used to target the Third World. Thus, the BBC News (28 October 2011) states that:

From the 1960s, the World Bank, the UN and a host of independent American Philanthropic Foundations, such as the Ford

and Rockefeller Foundations, began to focus on what they saw as the problem of burgeoning Third World numbers.

While African countries such as Zimbabwe, Tanzania, Uganda and Zambia are resisting pressure from the United Nations to legalise homosexuality (News24, 7 February 2017; van Klinken, 2013), the United Nations, of which organs and programmes are funded by the transnational biotechnology GM food producing corporations that are engineering homosexuality, has piled pressure on the African states to legalise homosexuality. In Zambia for instance the Secretary General of the United Nations has recently put pressure on the state to legalise homosexuality. However noting resistance by Zambians, Van Klinken (2013: 519) notes that: "...a particular Christian discourse in the debate, in which the international pressure to recognise gay rights, is considered a sign of the end times, and Ban Ki-moon, the United Nations and other international organisations are associated with the Antichrist and the Devil". Although the Zambians and other Africans have resisted legalisation of homosexuality, Farley (2011: 29) notes that the food that is distributed and donated to the world's impoverished is laced with chemicals that suppress the brain and intellect because it is considered difficult to control a population that is mentally sharp and awake.

If, during the enslavement era, Africans who remained on the beach and saw the ships drive off with the enslaved started crying and shouting, running up and down the beach waving their arms and shouting like they were mad, today Africans who remain on their cultural, institutional, family, marriage and social firmament cry and shout, wave their hands, move up and down the beaches in desperations as some of their folks are driven off, in the global spaceship, beyond their cultural, family, marital, social, religious, political and economic shores. Similarly, today Africans who remained on their firmament run up and down the "beaches" crying and shouting as their folks are being consumed by the New World Order agenda and practices that include human culling and massive global depopulation. While some Africans and other people in the global south continue to produce and consume organic food, they

run up and down the beaches, crying and shouting for their folks who have been fooled into giving up everything traditional and organic in favour of the global spaceship that is producing toxic genetically modified and nonorganic food and lifestyles in general. Having been fooled into leaving the African cultural shores of traditional medicine, some Africans are emergent victims of toxic genetically modified drugs as well as victims of experiments by contemporary global pharmaceutical corporations. Besides, having been fooled into leaving the African marriage and family shores, some Africans are now being consumed in the global spaceship's pornographic, dildonic and prostitution industries.

If globalisation is seen, as it should be, as a spaceship and if Africans are, as is the case, exhorted to get on to the [supposedly inclusive and humanitarian] global spaceship that unfortunately destroys, disrupts and distorts African cultures, families, marriages, societies, politics, economies, religions and so on then it is logical to argue that Africans are in fact being consumed by the global spaceship. Thus, just as during the enslavement era when African cultures, families, marriages, politics, societies, religions and so on were trampled upon, today globalisation continues to trample on the Africans' institutions albeit under the facades of civilisation, development, human rights, equality and so on. Whereas during the enslavement era, the enslaved were often subjected to infibulation to prevent them from mating and therefore from reproduction, today the enslaved are sterilised often involuntarily; they have their food, drinks and environments laced with chemicals designed to make them sterile and impotent. Whereas during the enslavement era, the captured Africans were nearly completely at the mercy of the masters, today Africans are at the mercy of the masters of the global spaceships. What they eat and drink is at the mercy of the boatmen and women of the global spaceship; similarly, what they wear is at the mercy of the boatmen and women of global spaceship; where they live is at the mercy of the boatmen and women of the global spaceship; what kinds of families and whether they get married is at the mercy of the boatmen and women of the global spaceships; what epistemologies they learn are at the mercy of the boatmen and

women of the global spaceship; and how long they live is at the mercy of the boatmen and women of the global spaceship.

Just like during the enslavement era when the enslaved consumed the rejects and cast-offs from the masters' tables, today Africans consume the rejects and cast-offs from the masters and mistresses of the global spaceship. Thus, while scholars like Maynard (2004: 15) argue that globalisation has become a contemporary fact of life as all of us are caught up in a vast network of transnational relations and interlinked patterns of consumption, there is need to notice that consumers are not homogeneous. There are some consumers who are more sovereign (Goodwin *et al* 2008) predominantly in the global north while in the global south the majority of the consumers are not sovereign, lacking as they do the means to purchase commodities of choice. Whereas Howard (2015: 110) observes that during the era of enslavement, there were societies such as The Freedmen's Aid Societies which helped by donating supplies of clothing including to many of the fugitive slaves who wore rags, the logic of such societies still persists in postcolonial Africa. While the enslaved adult males could be given uniforms discarded as worn out or taken from dead Whites or simply rejected by the quartermasters (Howard, 2015), in contemporary Africa, Blacks are similarly supplied with cast-offs from the West and North America some of which as will be discussed below consist of clothes from dead White people in the West and North America. Whereas during the enslavement era the children of the enslaved often wore donated adult garments cut down to fit, in contemporary Africa children continue to survive on the basis of donations of cast-offs that often hardly fit them.

In many of these instances of "humanitarian" 'consumerism' and circulations of food, drinks and clothes from imperial centres, the dark sides of the circulations are often ignored. For instance, little regard is paid to the fact that wearing branded clothes from imperial centres replicates the historical branding of African slaves with imperial insignia. In contemporary Africa, some still take pride in wearing cast-off clothes bearing names of imperial cities and football teams yet the logics of such brandings replicate the branding of enslaved Africans who had names of their masters and their cities printed on their bodies with red hot iron (Nhemachena, 2016). As

Mason *et al* (2013) argue wearing of branded clothing is an extension of the self because possessions are an extension of the self. Possessions are contributors and reflections of our identities since the possessions can be regarded as parts of ourselves and for the old the possessions help achieve a sense of continuity and preparations for death (Belk 1988). In this sense, the circulations of cast-offs from the imperial centres helps empire achieve a sense of continuity as well as birth of the emergent New World Order within which Africans are set to be sacrificed for purposes of depopulating the global spaceship. The logic of sacrifice, as Nhemachena (2016) argues is to draw the intended sacrificial victim closer before the actual sacrificial act is performed. So the ‘humanitarian’ aid and other ways in which Africans are being drawn closer to empire should be understood in terms of the logics of drawing sacrificial victims closer prior to executing the final sacrificial acts.

The contemporary discourses about the emergence of the Anthropocene, in which humanity is alleged to have caused damage to the earth and, thus, to require culling is one instance of legitimization of the emergent sacrificial era, which sadly targets the impoverished, dispossessed and exploited Africans for the depopulation and human culling. Also, the contemporary discourses about the emergence of post-anthropocentrism, the end of the anthropocentrism and the emergence of posthuman era effectively legitimise the human culling and the depopulation agenda of the globalists who are bent on sacrificing the Africans who they have paradoxically invited overtime into the “global village”. Since the posthuman and post-anthropocentric era is argued to move beyond humanism including humanist ethics, morality, law and so on, it becomes clear to understand the logics of sacrifice in this era that is intended to be insensitive to the cries of those being sacrificed. In other words, much as the boatmen of the slave ships were insensitive to the cries of the enslaved, the posthuman and post-anthropocentric era is intended by the boatmen and women of the global spaceship to be insensitive to the cries of those who have been captured onto the global spaceship. For the boatmen and women, it is an era of sacrificing the [global] captives, and sacrifice requires neither mercy nor sensitivity to the [ethics and morality] cries.

Apart from the fact that sometimes the impoverished consume clothes and other items without knowledge that they have been poisoned by the colonial and apartheid suppliers (Nhemachena, 2016; Gould, 2002), Mosquelier (1996: 84) noted that cast-off clothes are donated not necessarily for reasons of philanthropy but because some people will be anxious to alleviate their grief on the deceased whose clothes constitute a reminder. The clothes are donated to people outside the family as efforts to separate the living from the dead so that the human community can continue to survive and prosper (Mosquelier *ibid*). So, by relinquishing personal items of clothing suffused with the deceased's essence the surviving kin actualize the deceased's new identity as a soul devoid of a body-and which therefore has no need of clothes-while reinforcing the boundaries between the living and the dead. Mosquelier (*ibid*: 79-84) notes thus:

Apart from securing the spirit's clothes on the medium's bodies, tying the body with belts, scarves and wrappers is a way of physically enclosing the spirit within a shell of cloths and thereby creating the contours of the deities' physical substance. The possessing spirit is literally tied, strapped to her human vessel and bound within the layer of fabric that covers the devotee's frame. Clothing, thus, underscores the coming together of human and superhuman forces by binding the amorphous spirit within the corporeal structure of a medium. Clothes are such an intimate part of an individual's social person and presentation of self that they preserve the memory of their owner even when this person is dead. As a tangible evocation of their owner, clothes are in effect extensions of one's body.

Notwithstanding the above observations, the Waste and Resources Action Programme is cited in BBC News (11 February 2015) stating that almost half of the garments thrown out by the Britons end up going to a new home rather than ending up in a land fill or at an incineration plant. It is also noted that since the 1980s and 90s used clothing has gained a significant market share across Kenya, Malawi, Mozambique, Nigeria, Rwanda, Senegal, Swaziland, Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe. Although the second hand

clothing is known, in Ghana, as *obroni wawu* (clothes of the dead white man) and also in Kenya and Tanzania it is known as *kafa ulaya* (clothes of the dead whites) (BBC News, 11 February 2015), it is noted that Ghana is the biggest buyer of the cast-off clothes as every year 30 000 tons of used clothes arrive on the docks of the capital, Accra (The Telegraph, 12 July 2014). While some African countries decry [and moved to ban imported cast-off underwear] these donations including underwear, raising issues of human dignity, other people in the West decry the fact that it is often the poor in the world who produce new clothes yet they can only survive on recycled cast-offs. Thus, Express (13 July 2014) notes a complaint that:

A strange irony is at the heart of the charity shop clothing industry...a lot of these clothes that we wear were made by some of the poorest people in the world. They are then brought over to us, we buy them, we wear them, we get rid of them and then we, in effect, sell them back to more of the world's poorest people. Those people are actually helping people in the UK. It is their money.

Thus, while some Westerners, including Western backed NGOs, are very quick to condemn African funeral rituals including cleansing rituals and the funeral attires with prescribed colours and the requirements not to wear new clothes during mourning, (Manala, 2015; Woodfork, 2006), the same Western NGOs and other humanitarian organisations paradoxically distribute, among Africans including widows and widowers, second hand cast-off clothes including from the dead in the West. In the light of Mari-Anna's (2013) observation, that death is traditionally considered to bring contamination, the fact that Africans are made to wear clothes from the dead Westerners means that the Africans risk contamination as well as sacrifice at a metaphysical level. Furthermore, it means that Africans are not only made to carry the metaphysical spiritual burdens of Westerners but also that Africans are [unwittingly] made to grieve on behalf of the westerners. Thus, in some countries it is noted that to have weddings, women are advised not to wear second-hand clothing that is locally associated with cast-offs from the deceased (Vokes, 2015). In many African contexts, some clothes can

be part of religious worship worn to appease the gods, clothes can also be sacrifices to placate witches, wizards and deities; some clothes are soaked in herbal and medicinal concoctions to strengthen and protect the wearer and also the wearer's sweat is thought to strengthen the connection between the wearer and the clothes and this reinforces the notion that clothes act as second skin (Oyeniyi, 2015). So, one can understand not only why Westerners tend to name cars after their gods and goddesses including gaia (Lovegrove, 2013; Monitor, 3 October 2013) but also why historically colonists and slave drivers forced enslaved and colonised Africans to adopt names of Western gods and goddesses who needed sacrifices.

Apart from the problems arising from consuming cast-off clothes from imperial centres, there are also problems occasioned by consuming human hair extensions that are often worn by African women. Firstly, as the Daily Mail (31 October 2013) notes, some women develop illnesses including blinding headaches arising from the use of human hair extensions of the deceased people. Secondly, the Daily Mail (17 July 2008) notes that some of the people who shave off the hair which is later sold as hair extensions do so for religious reasons including for purposes of shedding off misfortunes by sacrificing their hair in the hope of positive changes in their lives.

This is to say, apart from the fact that some of the hair adornments are meant for the dead, (Sherrow, 2006), there are religious spiritual reasons for shaving the hair as well as for adorning hair extensions. Sherrow (2006: 397-398) for instance notes that:

Wigs also were placed on the heads of the dead before they were buried and ancient tombs contain wig boxes along with other personal items...Human hair for wigs came from slaves, people who sold their hair, or the heads of dead persons...In the early days of the Roman Empire, prostitutes were required by law to either bleach their hair or wear blond wigs to show their trade to the public.

While many in the business of hair extensions are not open about where the extensions come from (Spectator, 25 April 2015), Zambia Watchdog (22 Sept 2014) notes that hair extensions come from religious tonsure like the ceremonies in India and other places where

people swap their hair in return for a blessing. In spite of these metaphysical and spiritual dangers of wearing human hair extension, Gupta (2014: 2) notes that the hair which would otherwise constitute waste is sold and in this vein India exported 1 million kgs of human hair and its products worth US\$ 238 million. The problem as Gupta (ibid) notes, is that dumping of large amounts of hair waste at the banks of rivers led to pollution, health problems and conflicts which the Indian authorities could not resolve. Emphasising the dangers of wearing the human hair extensions, Zambia watchdog (22 September 2014) observes thus:

These Hindu pilgrims often offer their hair to deities such as the elephant-headed god 'Ganesha'. Women, men and even children give their hair as offerings, and as an act of devotion. According to their scripture, tonsuring, the hair shaving practice as offering to gods, should be done at least once in their lifetime. Doing so is regarded as a way of shedding the ego, ridding oneself of sin and making a vow to the gods. The spiritual implications of wearing someone else's hair may be devastating. For one, if tonsuring is a way of ridding oneself from sin according to Hindu belief, then all of the ills, spirits and wickedness of that person now dwell in this hairpiece.

In the realm of food consumption, Africa is being consumed by the global transnational corporations particularly the biotechnology corporations that are currently also grabbing African land in the context of the ongoing new scramble for Africa (Southall *et al*, 2009). In this sense, Africans can be seen as endangered by the distribution of genetically modified food and crops which apart from polluting the African environments also pose threats to the health of the Africans that consume the contentious GM food or crops. The fact that Africa as a continent is being swallowed into the global spaceship, via the depredations of Western transnational corporations, underscores the need by scholars on consumption not to construe consumption merely in terms of individual biological dictates. Global capital does not only swallow individuals but it also swallows up whole nations, regions and continents. Seen this way, the fallacy that Western transnational corporations are investors is

not only exposed, rather it becomes possible to see the transnational corporations as consuming regions of the world that are consequently “included” and engulfed into the capitalist driven global leviathan. In this capitalist driven global leviathan, which is marked by food apartheid, whereby the impoverished and dispossessed in Africa, unlike the Westerners, are barely able to afford and access organic food, it is only the privileged few who can access organic foods which are healthier.

While some scholars have advocated for sharing and solidarity economies (Satgar, 2014; Widlok, 2017) in which it is envisaged a world in which people share what they have, the critical question for Africa and the rests of the global south is not whether sharing is feasible or necessary but rather the critical question is about the safety of that which is shared, especially given the global food apartheid that continues to stratify consumers and determine abilities to choose between organic and GM food. Furthermore, the critical question for Africa and the rest of the global south is not about the necessity and feasibility of “humanitarianism” and what other scholars have called global flows or circulations, rather the critical question is about the safety of those flows and circulations as well as the net implications of those flows and circulations to African quests for food and national and continental sovereignty. As indicated above, even the enslaved were “beneficiaries” of “charity” in the form of cast-offs and so Africa’s continued reception of “humanitarianisms” and other forms of “charity” by way of cast-off does not speak to freedom, sovereignty, humanitarianism or even democracy.

In light of the above, it is germane to argue that the recent pronouncement of the United Nations ‘Responsibility to Protect’ (Mamdani, 2010) is in effect meant to facilitate the West’s consumption of Africa and the rest of the global south. To the extent that the Responsibility to Protect is founded on the logics of Western “humanitarianism” and “charity” that legitimate the infringement of African national and continental sovereignty, the principle is in effect a derogation of national and food sovereignty that are crucial in evading contemporary global matrices of power that underwrite contemporary global coloniality (Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2013). As Mamdani (2010) correctly argues, the Responsibility to Protect and

the attendant “humanitarianism” turn Africa and the global south into wards for the Westerners who use it to justify their interventionism on a continent which they have paradoxically denied national and continental [food] sovereignty for centuries.

The fact that colonists burnt down African granaries in order to force Africans to submit to the process of colonisation (Chigodora, 1997; Illiffe, 1990) underlines that denial of food sovereignty is closely connected to colonisation and the attendant denial of national and continental sovereignty. Without means to produce and sustain one’s own food, sovereignty in its manifold dimensions ceased to exist. In this vein, the contemporary efforts by Western transnational biotechnology and GMO producing corporation such as Monsanto and Syngenta to monopolise global seed production and distribution is in essence a replication of the colonial denial of [food] sovereignty to Africans and peoples of the global south (Mawere and Nhemachena, 2017). Similarly, the contemporary land grabs by Western transnational corporations that are being supported by Western governments and other institutions are meant to deny Africans their food and national sovereignty. In other words, Africa is effectively being colonised at a moment when western corporations are fronted to play the façade of agricultural and agrarian efficiency and discourses of investment and climate change.

While GMOs are being marketed as ‘smart crops’ for the climate change era and for the era of the Anthropocene, there is need to be mindful of the existence of arguments and evidence that climate change is deliberately contrived and or produced by major world powers. In other words, the argument is that the major powers like the USA are producing climate and weather changes through High-Frequency Active Auroral Research Programme (HAARP) which is an appendage of the strategic Defence Initiative-“Star Wars”. It is noted that from a military point of view, HAARP is a weapon of mass destruction and capable of destabilising agricultural and ecological systems around the world (Global Research, 29 November 2015). It is noted thus:

Weather modification, according to the US Air force document AF 2025 Final Report, offers the war fighter a wide range of possible

options to defeat or coerce an adversary; capabilities extend to the triggering of floods, hurricanes, droughts and earthquakes...Weather modification will become a part of domestic and international security and could be done unilaterally...It could have offensive and defensive applications...The ability to generate precipitation, fog and storms on earth or to modify space weather...and the production of artificial weather all are a part of an integrated set of [military] technologies (Global Research, 29 November 2015).

The upshot of the above is that there is need to be cautious about contemporary discourses about climate change. In a context where climate change and famine have not only historically coincided with colonisation but have also been used by colonists to force famished Africans to submit to colonisation (Illiffe, 1990; Chigodora, 1997), the need to be cautious is underlined. Also seen in a contemporary context where transnational corporations are grabbing African land from peasants, which replicates the colonisation of Africa, the climate change discourses can best be understood in terms of the new ongoing scramble for Africa. Like during the early colonial period, (re-)colonisation is always accompanied by discourses intended to legitimise at the ideological level, the nefarious projects.

Thus, while some thinkers argue for the need to embrace GMOs as a way to counter climate change and food insecurity, others argue that Africa and the global south more generally are capable of producing sufficient organic food for its population. Although some scholars argue for the need to bring in large transnational corporations as investors in the agricultural sectors of Africa, others argue that it is mainly the small scale farmers that have produced much of the food for Africa and so it is these small scale farmers that should be supported and not the transnational corporations that, in any case, displace the small scale farmers leaving Africa famished. While on one hand some scholars argue that food security can be ensured by producing and distribution of GMOs, there are also contrary arguments that show that Africans have historically suffered deliberate food and clothes poisoning by those that are keen to prop up [global] colonialism and apartheid (Martinez, 2013; White, 2004; Gould *et al*, 2002; The New York Times, 11 June 1998). The fact that

the colonial and apartheid governments poisoned food, wells and clothes that were distributed to and used by Africans serves to show the insecurities, on the part of Africans, in relying on the distribution and circulation of GM Food and other items from the West that is anxious to retain and prop up contemporary global apartheid.

Although some scholars call for recognition of an ethics of vulnerability entailing humanitarianism (Butler, 2012; Gilson, 2013; Cortina *et al*, 2016; Stasett, 2011), there are problems in such ethics of vulnerability if the historical origins of vulnerability including dispossession, exploitation and enslavement are not considered seriously. As the Mail and Guardian (26 July 2006) notes with respect to the British arch-imperialist, Cecil John Rhodes, while his admirers pointed the way in which he took “care” of Lobengula’s sons after the war in 1893, as colour-blind generosity, it is clear that through his ‘humanitarianism’, Rhodes simply wanted Lobengula’s sons to forget that they were the rightful rulers of the country that Rhodes had colonised. Thus, Rhodes is noted as having responded to one of Lobengula’s sons who expressed interest in accompanying Rhodes on a visit from South Africa back to Rhodesia; “Now if you come up with me, I must have no nonsense about your being a king. You will have to wash plates, and clean my boots. You understand?” (Maylam, 2005: 14). In this sense, in the erroneous belief that empire is genuinely humanitarian, contemporary Africans who have been made to forget that they are kings and chiefs on the continent have been reduced to cleaning the boots of colonial settlers and their descendants.

Seen in the context of Rhodes’ other remarks such as “I prefer land to niggers...One should kill as many niggers as possible” (Mail and Guardian, 26 July 2006), the “care” for Africans that Rhodes is reputed for [by some of his admirers] is questionable. In fact, while an ethics of vulnerability is argued by some writers to call for an ethical response and moral agency (Stasett, 2011), problems appear when those that have directly or indirectly caused the vulnerability subsequently reappear not under the banner of restitution and reparations but under the banner of ethics and morality. In this regard, although some scholars argue that Western ethics brought to the fore self-sufficiency, autonomy, will to power, agency, sense of

selfhood and images of persons as bounded, coherent, unified, rational, independent, masterful (Cortina *et al* 2016; Gilson, 2013), it is important to note that in Africa, Western colonialism brought the opposite of these. Western colonialism brought loss of senses of selfhood, dissipation of African identities, incoherence, loss of rationality, loss of will to power, loss of autonomy, absence of self-sufficiency, loss of mastery, loss of unity-it brought loss of identity and created vulnerability. Therefore, the vulnerabilities that are evident on the continent of Africa are neither a normal nor natural part of the human condition; they are a part and consequence of the vagaries of colonists who looted not only material possessions but also destroyed identities, senses of selfhood, unity, autonomy, sovereignty, mastery and rationality. In other words, for Africa and the global south more generally, what is needed is not further permeability, partibility, loss of autonomy, loss of sovereignty, loss of mastery or loss of self-sufficiency. The point here is that what is needed in Africa and the global south is not an ethics of vulnerability, as argued for by the scholars noted above, but what is needed is an ethics of reparations and restitutions which will allow Africans freedom, autonomy and sovereignty that foreclose the vagaries of Western biotechnology and GM food producing corporations.

The upshot of the above is that the critical question for Africa and the global south is not merely about vulnerability to food insecurity but *a fortiori* vulnerability to resilient global coloniality. There are feedback loops between the two forms of vulnerability and therefore Africa and the rest of the global south should aim to overcome both forms of vulnerability, simultaneously. We argue that one strong way to overcome these forms of vulnerabilities is for Africa to unite and work together as a rich and sovereign continent.

Chapter Outlines

Munyaradzi Mawere and Artwell Nhemachena's chapter 2 interfaces human rights and morality with [toxic] genetically modified food. The chapter teases out the debates around human culling and human rights through the doling out of genetically modified food. In this whole attempt, the chapter argues with profound concern that

genetically modified food threatens ethics, morals and human rights, in so far as it erodes the genetic [purity] constitution of humans which is the foundation of human identity, human ethics, society, culture, morality and laws. The chapter concludes that the doling out of genetically modified food is a nefarious and frivolous strategy by the manufacturers and proponents of GMOs that culminates in super-colonialism and terrorisation of the impoverished and disempowered of the earth.

In Chapter 3, Fidelis Duri unravels the discordant and ambivalent relationship existent between illicit alcohol commerce and consumption in Zimbabwe as a result of the country's catalysmic melting-down socio-economic landscape. In the whole, the chapter argues that while the commerce involving the trafficking and selling of outlawed and highly intoxicating alcoholic beverages of Mozambican origin was largely a blessing to considerable numbers of marginalised Zimbabweans who eked sustenance from it, the same cannot be said of the consumers and the society in general whose health and general well-being were severely destabilised. Judging from their consequences, these alcoholic beverages have been a curse to those who imbibe in them as they result in societal discord, widespread alcohol-related health problems, violence and early deaths, among other such social ills.

Nkwazi Mhango's chapter 4 explores the ramifications of GMFs on Africa culturally, economically and politically. The chapter argues that Africa stands to lose more shall it not stand to resist GMOs, GMFs and GMTs in general as the companies [and their mother countries, most from the West and the Americas] that manufacture these products aim at profit making at the peril of Africans. To make sure that Africa remains vigilant of all the machinations and nefarious plots by GMOs manufacturers and that it [Africa] protects its people from GMOs pollution, Mhango urges Africa to go back to researching its history to discover how it was able to feed its people without necessarily depending on any aid before the inception of colonialism. It is not only important but possible for Africa to feed its own people, as Mhango reminds us, given that there are still institutions in local communities that can help Africa's researchers to trace this missing link in Africa's development programmes.

Artwell Nhemachena's chapter 5 is entitled 'Food, Health and Science in Africa: Locating GMOs Debates in the Shifting Global Epistemological Terrains'. In the chapter, Nhemachena argues that although food may be regarded as mere food, it often comes with political, social, cultural, economic and epistemic baggage that frame what we eat, when we eat, where we eat, how we eat and so on. In other words, in matters of food, there are epistemological and ontological questions that should constitute part of the discourses on the contemporary epistemic and ontological turns. Nhemachena further argues that while traditional Marxist scholarship on education, would classify education and epistemologies associated with it as part of states' ideological apparatuses, it is imperative to note that education and associated epistemologies have increasingly come to be controlled by the global transnational corporations [some of which produce the contentious GMOs] that fund global institutions be they media, education, politics, economics, culture and religion. Therefore, for Nhemachena, there is need to situate debates on food, including genetically modified food, within the emergent broader global discourses about science and technology studies, including biotechnology. In this sense, the epistemologies being interrogated in the chapter are not necessarily constitutive of African states' ideologies but the epistemologies are global, meaning more specifically Western, ideologies about transnational corporations' emergent biotechnology or genetically modified organisms (GMOs) or genetically modified food (GMF) industries. Therefore, the chapter is less about Marxist ideological state apparatuses than it is about what can be called global [Western] ideological apparatuses that often are served by and serve the ends of global [Western] transnational corporations, even if to the detriment of Africans and their states. Nhemachena argues that since the colonial dispossession and impoverishment of Africans, Africans have witnessed diminished freedoms to decide what, if at all anything, goes into their stomachs. So, to be dispossessed of one's means of production and to be consequently impoverished as was done to Africans is tantamount to being deprived of [or to have attenuated] freedom to consume. Consequently, it is argued in this chapter that there cannot be conceivable freedom to consume without attendant freedom to

produce; yet the burgeoning global business of “humanitarianism” has fostered, among African beneficiaries, illusions of freedoms to consume without attendant freedoms to produce, and *a fortiori* to own means of production. Contrary to arguments that would assume that there are experts to whom the production and safety of food can best be delegated, this chapter argues that consumption without producing renders powerlessness to Africans that are reduced to consumers or beneficiaries, including of some toxic waste that is often presented as food.

Chapter 6 is authored by Muhammed A. Yinusa; Joseph A. Oluyemi and Raji Abdullateef. In this chapter, the authors critically examine the (neo-)imperialist dumping of second hand clothes and the use of such clothes by Nigerians. The authors argue that the use of imported second hand clothes by Nigerians dates back to the early post-colonial period when shipments of used clothes were brought into the Nigerian shores through Okrika, a sea port in Rivers State, Nigeria, thus, the name “Okrika” (meaning used clothes). In the pre-colonial period, Nigerians were known to dress in their local attires such as that which show-cased various cultural and ethnic backgrounds in the country. It is argued that the arrival of European explorers brought with it, the European way of dressing which was over time acculturated into the Nigerian society and culture. In addition to this, the increasing demand for these clothes seems to have also eroded the rich cultural heritage in Nigerian attires which were traditionally preserved for centuries thereby making many in the country lose their traditional [identity] cultural attire. The chapter, therefore, examines the factors responsible for the continued increase in demand for second hand clothes among many Nigerians in the country and how the dumping of second hand clothes in Nigeria constitutes a tool for imperialism. The chapter employs the Social Identity theory in explaining how the use of second hand clothes in Nigeria has led to the loss of social identity of the traditional African traditional dress culture. It suggests steps that can be employed to eradicate the dumping of second hand clothes in Nigeria and how the lost identity of the rich cultural traditional Nigerian attire can be restored.

Steyn Khesani Madlome and Munyaradzi Mawere's chapter 7 is entitled 'Meddling African Personhood and Aesthetics with Artificial Facial and Body Enhancement: Exploring Conceptions of Beauty by VaTsonga Women in Zimbabwe'. Madlome and Mawere argue that it is a matter of concern when people have lost trust in their natural beauty and consequently make strenuous efforts to pursue artificial beauty, which is not only alien but meddle and muddle their traditional African conceptions of personhood. It is now a common trend that a lot of people especially ladies in Africa, do not feel comfortable with their natural appearance. Most of them generally like to apply some chemicals, put on some facial or bodily marks or dress in a way which to them seems [deceptively] more attractive than their natural appearance. Thus, some Africans have become accustomed to this scenario such that they now appreciate this "artificialised" beauty which is enhanced by chemicals or other artificial foreign materials. Sadly, a lot of the chemicals that are used to enhance beauty have some side effects which affect the wellbeing of victims. In this vein, this chapter seeks to discuss the importance of sticking to the concept of African beauty, among the VaTsonga people, as compared to applying artificial substances on their bodies. VaTsonga beautifying marks such as *madeha*, *makanja*, *swibayana*, among others, are discussed in this chapter. The chapter argues that the traditional ways of enhancing beauty among the VaTsonga did not have side effects as compared to the contemporary exotic artificial "enhancements". The chapter interrogates the thoughtless use of these artificial materials by "Black" Africans.

In chapter 8, which is entitled 'Africa without Genetically Modified Organisms: On the Need for National Food Sovereignty', Misheck Chingozha and Artwell Nhemachena critically engage with the notions of national and food sovereignty in Africa. Chingozha and Nhemachena argue that the neglect of African history accounts for failure to address land restitution and reclamations by Africans. It is argued that the West hopes, via tinkering with technology, including biotechnology, for producing GMOs, that Africans will be equipped with means to adapt to the barren and dry pieces of land in reserves-which were allocated to them centuries ago, by colonial settlers. Chingozha and Nhemachena argue that Western technology,

including biotechnology for GMOs production, is part and parcel of imperial efforts at containment and pacification of Africans who are thereby enjoined to worship contemporary Western technological fetishes that are sadly meant to ensure that the Africans forget the historical colonial dispossession, theft and robbery. It is argued that the West is always poised to bring about [technological] innovations which are meant to assist them in sidetracking real African concerns about restitution of their fertile, arable and wet lands. The chapter argues that the West is always ready to create technological fetishes that help it defeat or preempt African claims for sovereignty and autonomy over their heritages, including land. In so far as GMOs biotechnology is deemed to circumvent nature, including natural organic farming, it is designed to circumvent African claims to their natural resources including land, which in any case is already suffering the new scramble, in the form of current Western transnational land grabs, for African resources. It is further argued that it would be naïve for Africans to think that when Westerners donate agricultural equipment, [GMO] food and other things, they [Westerners] are necessarily motivated by philanthropy-the motivation is more to keep or contain Africans in the barren, infertile land, and in such sections of the continent to which they were dumped by the colonial settlers. In other words, the motive of the facile Western philanthropism is to keep Africans as prisoners in the colonial reserves or in the barren and dry communal lands; they retain Africans as prisoners in the colonial reserves by pretending to give them imperial gifts of the purported charity. Chingozha and Nhemachena argue that the purpose of imperial 'charity' is to prevent Africans from revolting and reclaiming their fertile and wetter regions which were hitherto monopolized by descendants of colonial settlers.

Chapter 9 is authored by Orji Boniface Ifeanyi and ASANEBI, Daupamowei Henry: the title of the chapter is: 'Appraising Polarity: Views towards Genetically Modified Foods in Nigeria'. In this chapter, the authors argue that the challenges of food insecurity are a brazing issue in African countries, especially Nigeria. Thus, it is argued that Nigeria adopted GMOs as a matter for food security as well as food availability. It is pointed out that Nigeria allowed the introduction of biotechnology in the genetic modification of plants

in food production within its shores. The authors note that this led to the appearance of genetically modified foods (GMFs) in both the agricultural sector and market place in Nigeria. It is noted that in Nigeria, the introduction of GMFs is shrouded in controversies of epic proportions based on food safety, food sovereignty, ethnic and religious sectarian views. Thus, the chapter seeks to make a critical appraisal of the thoughts and teachings of the various religious sects in Nigeria towards GMFs, looking at the pros and cons of GMFs towards enhancing food security and the health implications on humans who consume GMOs. The major finding of the chapter is that while GMF has been presented as the way out of food insecurity in Nigeria, some groups and religions urged the government to impose a ban on GMFs in Nigeria. The chapter therefore emphasises the need to recognise challenges such as religious beliefs, ethnic/sectarian beliefs, lack of awareness, inadequate training, low levels of education and poor extension services among others in introducing GMFs technology to farmers in Nigeria. It is a well-known fact that Africa, and Nigeria in particular, has abundance of arable land, and it is thus inconceivable that the continent can have food shortages. It is further argued that African farmers are not necessarily poor but they are impoverished by (neo-)colonial expropriations and appropriations of their resources including land. The authors argue that this is the reason why there are current debates about whether Africans need mere food security or they need more of food sovereignty.

The last chapter (Chapter 10) by Tapuwa Mubaya and Munyaradzi Mawere, interrogates African identities and the African consumption of skin bleaching substances, mostly by [African] women as they engage in mimicry of “whiteness”. The chapter raises a critical question: “Why do some Africans, through skin bleaching and consumption of foreign hair, seek to distort their God-given nature?” Through such questioning, Mubaya and Mawere argue for decolonial thinking and total liberation of the mindset among African women in order to help curb the global production and consumption of the dangerous skin bleaching substances. Besides, Mubaya and Mawere defend an African conception of beauty that is based on the African epistemological paradigm which accommodates diversity of

thought from multiple indigenous African cultures and quest to restore confidence in the African people.

This is a must read text for African politicians and policy makers, scholars and students of African Studies, Law, Political Science, Cultural Heritage and International Diplomacy, Biological Studies, Social Anthropology and Sociology.

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Human Culling and Super-colonialism? Human Rights Issues of Doling Out Genetically Modified Food in Africa

Munyaradzi Mawere & Artwell Nhemachena

They still lived long lives. I have seen Indians of a hundred and twenty to a hundred and forty years of age who still went to hunt...Their subsistence was of fish and meat roasted and boiled...They always had a supply of soup, which was their greatest drink. Their greatest task was to feed well...They drank only good soup...It was this which made them live long and multiply much (McMillan, 2015:132-3 citing Denys 1632).

Introduction

While some criticisms have been made by ethicists about the playing of God by the Westerners who genetically modify organisms, hardly anything has been written on the implications of genetic modifications on human rights, and on the human genetic constitutions of those that consume the genetically modified foods and other such substances. If consuming genetically modified food (GMO) negatively alters the longevity and the genetic constitutions of human beings, the downside is that humans face a real threat of not only losing their lives but also of gradually losing their human identities if their basic genetic constitutions are so altered, directly or indirectly. Sadly, while those that manufacture genetically modified food and organisms arrogate to themselves the place of God, the consumers of the genetically modified food risk being turned into monsters as their genetic constitutions are altered and realtered. They are made to distance themselves from their own humanity and identity constitutions and as some scholars like Deleuze and Guattari (1987) argue, they are made to 'become animals'. The issue then is with the place and necessity of human rights in a context where some

humans have arrogated the positions of God while degrading the rest of humanity to [atavistic] monsters via genetic alterations.

Besides, questions of human rights that arise as alterations of human genetic compositions threaten the entire human rights edifice, there are questions of morality in the entire edifice of genetic modification. The argument that plays out in this whole scenario is: if [as is the case] human rights are premised on the possession of the now embattled human genetic constitutions, it then follows that human rights fall away when human beings are made to become animals. As has been evident in colonial and enslavement contexts, where Africans were portrayed as animals and in terms of animism, human rights are ignored where people are deemed to be animists and animals (Nhemachena, 2016).

This chapter interfaces human rights and morality with [toxic] genetically modified food and in doing so it teases out the debates around human culling through the doling out of genetically modified food. The chapter argues that genetically modified food threatens ethics, morals and human rights, in so far as it erodes the genetic [purity] constitution of humans which is the foundation of human identity, human ethics, society, culture, morality and laws. The chapter concludes therefore that the doling out of genetically modified food is a nefarious and frivolous strategy by the manufacturers and proponents of GMOs that culminates in super-colonialism – the intensification and amplification of colonialism – by converting human beings into beastly forms and alienate them from their own identities, resources, rights, laws and morality.

The Global Elite and the Playing of God

While debates about GMOs have focused on ethics, justice, legality and morality, this chapter contends that the use of GMOs to deny Africans legitimate ownership of their resources, to deny Africans their identities as human beings with cultures, religions and epistemologies can be firmly placed within the ongoing debates on coloniality, posthumanism and animism. Contemporary claims by the dispossessed and impoverished people for [food] sovereignty (Bradley *et al*, 2015) must not be narrowly interpreted in terms of the

multinational and industrial food system failures to 'fairly and equitably distribute healthy, affordable, culturally appropriate food'. Nor should the food sovereignty movements be superficially interpreted merely in terms of liberal rights and constitutionalism (Ibid) because more profoundly the movements speak to decoloniality and coloniality by food-producing corporations of the Global North, particularly Western imperialists and North America.

The best way to understand the emergent genetically modified organisms and genetically modified food is to put them in the context within which they are emerging. The context in which the GMOs are emerging is one where there are increasing concerns by some Western and American thinkers about overpopulation but in a paradoxical world in which those that sponsor overpopulation and depopulation agendas are the same ones that monopolise and control resources that they have looted from the dehumanised impoverished in Africa who they are now targeting for [posthuman and antihuman] extinction, in the Anthropocene. In a world that is less worried about restitution and compensation for colonial and enslavement looting, than it is worried about the human extinction, the descendants of colonial looters are now resetting the world agenda as one of overpopulation instead of one of restitution and compensation for colonial wrongs. Thus, in the context of the global [which is in fact Western and American] depopulation agenda, King (2012: 224) laments the fact that AIDs was deliberately introduced into the world and particularly to Africa so that it would adopt contraceptive dependency which would bring down the population. Similarly, Davis (2013: 120) states that:

According to proponents of the depopulation agenda theory...the tools of the extermination effort include genetically modified crops, fluoride in the water supply, vaccinations and prescription drugs, the availability of birth control and abortions, outbreaks of diseases (which are always manufactured in a lab) and the packing on your food...warns about dyes used in plastics, textiles, and even money, which poison you when you touch it.

This human culling has been linked to bloodlines of the Western secret society that runs the world through deception and scientific techniques (Watts, 2013: 46). The human culling involving the removal of the 'weak', the 'sick', the 'damaged' and the 'undesirable' (News24, 14 December 2011) is noted to have already begun (Natural News, 10 August 2012). For Natural News (ibid):

The "Great Culling" of the human population has quietly begun. Covertly, insidiously, mercilessly, a global depopulation agenda has been launched. As this plays out, the vast majority of the human race will be removed from the gene pool ... From one point of view, this analysis may actually be correct. It's difficult to see how today's mindless masses of dumped-down consumers...steeped in video games, television and junk food...can offer any meaningful contribution to the future of human civilisation. So, from the point of view of the global controllers, "culling the herd" of humanity is actually a good thing. It makes humanity stronger, they say, in much the same way that culling the weaklings from the herd of wild animals improved the aggregate gene pool of the targeted species as a whole.

Further exposing the schemes of the global elite that are at the helm of the global depopulation agenda, Bates *et al* (2010: 273) argue that: "this is not to embrace a doomsday scenario although it is possible that there will be a culling of human population from the 9 to possibly 1.2 billion projected for 2100". Although this global human culling agenda is increasingly gaining traction now, it can be traced to the ideas of Thomas Malthus who in the 18th century posited what came to be known as a misanthropic theory that has been likened to the contemporary discourses around the Gaia hypothesis as well as to postanthropocentrism and posthumanism (Blahuta *et al*, 1996; Lovelock, 2007). The Gaia hypothesis holds that the earth has no immense but limited ability to act as the source of all our activities and as a sink for all of the wastes and by-products of these activities. But once the human population's size becomes large enough that its activities overwhelm this ability of the earth to act as a source and a sink, the system will begin to break down. The consequence will be massive loss of life forms, which means less

food, and if not human extinction at least a culling of the human population.

Although the Gaia hypothesis is being popularised to explain climate change and the consequent supposed need to adopt and embrace GMOs, Global Research (29 November 2015) notes that the climatic changes are deliberately engineered by the US military which has developed advanced capabilities that enable it selectively to alter weather patterns in the targeted areas of the world, especially the Global South. While James Lovelock (2007: 1) intends to divert the attention of critical scholars by arguing that the current climate change that threatens human beings with extinction is a result of the revenge of Gaia or of the Earth, Global Research (29 November 2015) correctly notes that the changes in climate are a result of technology, which is being perfected in America under the High Frequency Active Auroral Research Program (HAARP) thus:

... is a weapon of mass destruction, operating from outer atmosphere and capable of destabilising agricultural and ecological systems around the world...Weather modification is the pre-emptive weapon par-excellence. It can be directed against enemy countries or “friendly nations” without their knowledge, used to destabilise economies, ecosystems and agriculture...The disruption in agriculture creates a greater dependency on food aid and imported grain staples from the US and other Western countries...During the Vietnam war, cloud seeding techniques were used under the project Popeye, the objective of which was to prolong the monsoon season and block enemy supply routes along the Ho Chi Minh Trail.

While profound worries have been expressed about the manipulation and doctoring of weather and the weaponisation of the weather through HAARP and other mechanisms (Mail Online, 16 February 2015; Global Research, 18 January 2015; The Guardian 16 February 2015), the American and Western biotechnology companies continue to apply for genetically engineered “climate change crops” carrying out what amounts to an intellectual property grab in the emerging lucrative climate change market (Hulme, 2009). Not only are the Western corporations using the rhetoric of

addressing hunger to push for a model of agriculture in which Western corporations engage in a new wave of colonialism by pushing African small-scale farmers out of business (World Development Movement, April 2014: 1-2), but some academics are also pushing for an ethical thinking that is post-anthropocene in the sense of not considering the [African] human to be the dominant or most important species (Zylinska 2014: 20) of the earth. However, this drive to a post-anthropocentric and posthuman ethics, without human moral autonomy (Roden 2014: 182) is clearly nefarious if it is properly understood within the context of the food apartheid in which consumers in the Global South are forced to eat genetically modified food while in the Global North consumers are able to eat organic wholesome food (Hassan 2014: 52). In this sense, it is the consumers in the Global South who are forced to eat genetically modified food that has been shown to cause prostate cancer, non-hodgkin lymphoma, leukemia, multiple myeloma, homosexuality, breast cancer, and all other changes that violate the integrity of testicular tissue and impair testicular structure (Glynn, 2016: 2).

World Economy, Human Identities and Epistemologies

While the illuminati, comprising the global secret society, are noted to be keen on population control so as to reduce the world population and excessive exploitation of the environment (Starkweather, 2007: 268), the United Nations is argued to be powerless against the illuminati and against the corporations [owned and controlled by the secret society] that control the world economy. This is so because the corporations of the Global North are strategically positioned to control not only the economy but also the epistemologies, institutions and politics of the world. Noting ways in which the UN is financially and politically controlled by some in the West, the New American (20 March 2017) points out that the Rockefeller family wrote a check for the United Nations that enabled it to buy the property in New York City that became its global headquarters. Also, the Rockefellers are noted to have:

... utilised both their financial and political clout to advance schemes for empowering various UN-related institutions: the World Bank, International Monetary Fund, World Health Organisation, World Trade Organisation, UNICEF etc.... They also fund the creation of a vast army of organisations that have formed the bases for exploiting most of the 'wedge issue' conflicts in our society: abortion, population control, homosexual/LGBT rights...

In a context of global apartheid characterised by food apartheid and consumption apartheid more broadly, African people are worried about the replications of apartheid and colonial era use of poisoned food and clothing in the guise of humanitarianism to kill the indigenous people. Much as apartheid and colonial regimes used poisoned screwdrivers, poisoned rings with deadly powders, whisky laced with toxic herbicides, umbrellas with poisoned tips, walking sticks that could fire poisonous pellets, toxic poison on underwear, poisoned shirts, to kill Africans in undetectable ways (The New York Times, 11 June 1998; Standard 9 April 2002; Nhemachena, 2016), Africans are worried about being force fed with GMOs which are both toxic and morally unacceptable. Worries about the replications of apartheid and colonial era employment of scientists to make substances designed to reduce the fertility and virility of indigenous people of Africa, and to develop bacteria which kill only blacks or pigmented people (BBC News, 12 June 1998), Africans are worried about the contemporary popularisation of GMOs which they are force-fed, all in the name of humanitarianism and food aid. Similarly, Africans are worried about the replication of colonial and apartheid era developments of chemicals and biological agents designed to kill but make the cause of death appear to have been natural (Standard, 9 April 2002) yet salient to those with critical intellectual eyes.

In a context where some scholars are arguing for posthuman ethics that do not privilege [African] human beings, Africans and other citizens of the Global South have a cause to worry especially given the colonial and apartheid history where chemical and biological agents were used against the blacks (White, 2004; Nhemachena, 2016) and many indigenous populations of the world such as the Aborigines of Australia. In a context where African food,

clothes wells, rivers, and streams have been poisoned, cholera and anthrax have been spread (McGregor 2002; Martinez 2003: 459-60), it becomes even more suspicious when indigenous people receive GMOs from their [former] enemies and colonial powers who in fact know neither justice nor morality, in their relations with Africans. While Africans have been cultured since independence to uncritically embrace second hand clothing, during apartheid and colonialism, some Africans died from wearing second hand clothing doused with insecticides and many other diseases such as hepatitis (Nhemachena, 2016). Noting the nefarious activities [including covert poisoning of Africans] of the colonial regime in the then Rhodesia, McGregor (2002: 131-4) states thus:

The Rhodesian poisoning tactic involved infiltrating guerrilla supply lines with poisoned clothing and food. It was a deliberate attempt to exploit the popular association between poisoning and witchcraft and to break the relationship between guerrillas and civilians on which successful guerrilla warfare depended... The Rhodesians used the credo that the “means justify the ends”... Knowing that guerrillas depended upon civilians for the supply of clothing, equipment, foodstuffs and other supplies inside the country, they endeavoured to infiltrate these networks and poison the goods that passed through them...

In all these activities by the colonial and apartheid regimes, doctors, and chemists from universities were recruited to identify chemical and biological agents [some of which were injected in meat which was distributed through pseudo operations of friendliness] that could be used against Africans (Martinez, 2003: 459-460). In a contemporary context where some gaia scholars like James Lovelock (2007) are arguing for the need not to prioritise human welfare; where they are arguing that the world has too many mouths to feed; and where they argue that the earth is in imminent danger of transition to a hot and inhospitable state and therefore that there is need to get rid of excess population that constitute excess mouths to feed, there are undertones of coloniality characterised by its nefarious past. While James Lovelock (ibid: 181) argues for cutting the world population

from six billion to one billion or less so as to free some people to live in many different ways without harming gaia as he says, it is important to note that indigenous people have already been killed through many different ways in order to make way for colonist and enslavers. Also, though James Lovelock (ibid: 15) argues that human beings must not worry about statistical risks of cancer from eating synthesised food produced by the chemical and biochemical industries, he further argues supporting the global food apartheid that:

Whatever form future society takes it will be tribal, and hence there will be the privileged and the poor. This being so, there would in our high-tech world surely be a fashion among the rich for eating real food: vegetables grown in soil and cooked with meat and fish (p. 171).

It is on the basis of this gaia hypothesis which the West is fronting in the discourses of climate change, greenhouse effects; biotechnology, population control and resource scarcity. It is also this gaia hypothesis that is used as justification by the global elite who, according to Lloyd (2015), plan to introduce scientifically engineered global population reduction through viruses, vaccines and genetically modified food in order to cut the world population to less than 1 billion, leaving the earth's resources for the exclusive use of the global oligarchy. In this regard, Lloyd (ibid) notes that The Rockefeller Foundation, working with John D Rockefeller's Population Council, the World Bank, the United Nations Development Programs, The Ford Foundation and others, had been working with the World Health Organisation for 20 years to develop an anti-fertility vaccine using tetanus, as well as with other vaccines availed in the name of birth control or family planning methods. In all this, the scenario according to Hagger (2010: 110), is that: "...the syndicate have planned to reshape the world and reduce its population to a "sustainable" figure by encouraging local wars, spreading disease and exploiting famine so that it can control the world and loot the Earth's natural resources for the benefit of its own select band of relatively few oligarchs..."

Disclosing that behind Western discourses about sustainability, lies the agenda for human culling, Veltman (2015: 15) notes that:

...and Aldus Huxley published *Brave New World*, in which he outlined a plan to keep the world population under 2 billion...Hereby, population control, which had been associated with abstinence and birth control, became linked with mass surveillance, mass depopulation, and mass extermination...A World Conference on Population (1957) claimed that a population under 1 billion would be ideal. In 1974, the Club of Rome suggested a population of under 500 million...In 1976, the same club of Rome decided that an ideal sustainable population is under 1 billion. Since then the UN deep ecology agenda...wants less than 300 million.

Thus, although Tiffin (2015: 145) argues that only the most radical of environmentalist would dare suggest the culling of humans, he worryingly argues for a shift from anthropocentrism to a more biocentric approach to environment. However, if this antipathy to anthropocentrism is understood in a context where the global elite still control the planetary resources as well as the biotechnological mechanisms that are being used to induce the death of others (Marrs 2016), the ultimate goal is not to bring about a shift to biocentrism because some humans in the form of the global elite still exercise their anthropocentrism in terms of continuing to own and control not only resources but also retaining the means and [biological, biotechnological and chemical] weapons to erase other human beings from the face of the earth. Furthermore, as Marrs (Ibid) argues, in addition to rising incidences of cancer, there already is an unprecedented number of deaths due to medications for diseases that may not even exist. Therefore, there is consternation about the global elite who are bent not only on playing God by engineering and editing genes, deciding who should die or live, manufacturing poisons for purposes of softly killing other human beings using toxic food and medicines (Global Research, 23 May 2015), but control the economy, human identities and epistemologies of the world.

GMOs: An Insult to the Dispossessed and Impoverished of the Earth

The worry is that there is evidence that it is the impoverished particularly in Africa and the rest of the Global South who are targeted in the GMO business. In this regard, Glynn (2016: 1) notes that more than half the 28 countries in the European Union including France and Germany, voted to forbid their farmers from growing genetically modified crops. Italy, Austria, Greece, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania and Poland also joined the exodus. Also, other regions like Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland and Belgium also followed suit. It is important to also note that the Western biotechnology corporations such as Monsanto use a variety of means to both entice and coerce Africans to accept eating GMOs. There is the pretence of philanthropy in the guise of fighting climate change so as to force African consumers and farmers to accept GMOs (The African Centre for Biodiversity, 2015). Africans are also coerced to adopt the GMOs scheme in the guise of fighting food insecurity. In this whole process, African consumers and farmers' human rights are denied such that in spite of demonstrations by African consumers and farmers against Western corporations such as Monsanto, their rights are ignored and trampled upon. Thus, The African Centre for Biodiversity (2015: 11) notes that:

In 2011, small-scale farmers in Lutzville in the Northern Cape submitted a formal objection to Monsanto's field trials, under the auspices of the Agrarian Reform for Food Sovereignty Campaign, assisted by the Surplus People's Project (SPP). The concerns of local farmers in this case were dismissed as being largely emotional and unscientific, a catchall terms frequently used against those who question the safety or efficacy of GM crops, even those among the scientific community.

Such demonstrations against Western biotechnology corporations have been going on for some years now but without effectively forcing attention to the concerns of consumers and farmers in the Global South. Heller *et al* (2003: 155) notes that:

Participants in the anti-World Trade organisation (WTO) demonstrations in Seattle during November 1999 included peasant farmers and representatives of indigenous groups...consumer and ecology groups from around the world. Drawing linkages between food, land, bodily sovereignty, cultural autonomy, and identity...these groups have protested the biological and cultural homogenisation associated with genetically modified organisms...

Similar demonstrations were staged around the world in 2013 and in 2016 (Mail and Guardian, 31 May 2013; Global Research 21 April 2016). In South Africa, for instance, demonstrations were staged against Monsanto for its aggressive attempts to force genetically modified organisms and their chemicals [which in spite of promises have not yielded any benefits to consumers] onto South African consumers and farmers (Global Research, 21 April 2016). Showing other ways in which the Western biotechnology corporations coerce Africans to feed on toxic GMOs, Shiva (2003: 108-9) notes reactions by African civil society organisations thus:

We, African civil society groups, participants to the World Summit on Sustainable Development, comprised of more than 45 African countries join hands with the Zambian and Zimbabwean governments and their people in rejecting genetically engineered contaminated food for our starving brothers and sisters:...we refuse to be used as dumping ground for contaminated food, rejected by the northern countries, and we are enraged by the emotional blackmail of vulnerable people in need, being used in this way...our response is to strengthen solidarity and self-reliance within Africa, in the face of this wave of colonisation through GE technologies, which aim to control our agricultural systems, through the manipulation of seed by corporations. We will stand together in preventing our continent from being contaminated by genetically engineered crops, as a responsibility to our future generations.

As hinted earlier, the challenge in all this is that it is the dispossessed and impoverished who are force-fed with GMOs in the guise of humanitarianism (Mawere and Nhemachena, 2017). The

descendants of colonial dispossessors have the audacity to tell stories about overpopulation and pressure on African resources while they keep colonially looted resources to themselves; and paradoxically feeding their victims with toxic GMOs on the pretext that the world has become overpopulated to the extent that it can no longer naturally produce enough food. Thus, the paradox is that the descendants of colonial dispossessors claim that nature, in the sense of organic production, is no longer useful while these descendants of colonists keep the African natural resources to themselves. In fact, while they evangelise the need to move away from nature, including organic natural farming, they paradoxically embed themselves in African natural resources. Through discursive practices around climate change (Krimsky *et al*, 2016; Nhemachena and Dhakwa, 2017) there are efforts to normalise the consumption of GMOs while at the same time evangelising the emergence of posthuman and antihuman eras where African human beings are construed and treated as excess or surplus entities with neither human essence nor transcendence over their natural resources.

As Hook (2001: 2) argues, the effects of discursive practices is to make it virtually impossible to think outside them, to be outside them is, by definition to be mad, to be beyond comprehension and therefore beyond reason. Citing Said (1983: 216), Hook (2001: 6) writes thus: “The will to exercise...control in society and history has also discovered a way to clothe, disguise, rarefy and wrap itself systematically in the language of truth, discipline, rationality, utilitarian value and knowledge”. While discourses about the need to shift to a posthuman and antihuman society are increasingly being popularised in academics, Nhemachena (2016) notes that collapsing human African beings with animals has for centuries been the colonial and enslavement practice that served also to deny Africans humanity and human rights. Understood this way, contemporary resuscitations of colonial animism and animalisation of Africans has implications not only for discourses about human rights in Africa but also for discourses and practices of “humanitarianism” including GMO food “humanitarianism” and other such dubious forms of philanthropism. In a context where Africans are forced to eat GMF which is proved to cause cancerous growths, turn them into

hermaphrodites or creatures with organs of both sexes, turn them into homosexuals and result in birth defects, the implications are that GMF is meant to threaten the identities of Africans by turning them into beastly animal forms. The effect of this is to turn the clocks of time back to the colonial eras when Africans were represented as animals and as animists, indistinct from animals and other freaks of nature (Nhemachena, 2016). The difference is that this time around, the processes are not mainly premised on representing Africans as animals but more on performatively turning them into animals without morals, without humanely morphology, without culture, without laws, without institutions, (Nhemachena *ibid*; Nhemachena, this volume) without rights and ensuring that they are reliant on perking from the heaps of GMF dropped off on the continent by “humanitarian” organisations and states in the Global North.

The fact that the current resurgence of discourses of animism are appearing at the same time Africans are worried that they are being forced to consume humanitarian food aid that they consider to be animal feeds in the countries of origin (Nhemachena, 2017), underscores the hypocrisy of Western discourses and practices of human rights and “humanitarianism”. While distributing animal feeds to Africans, the practices are hypocritically described as “humanitarianism”. Thus, holding that GMOs are an instrument of neo-colonial exploitation and subordination fostered by multinational corporations and their governments, some African countries have rejected GMF (Stewart, 2009: 11). The African worries about being forced by biotechnology corporations and their governments to consume GMF are also founded on the reports that Foundations like Rockefeller Foundation, Monsanto Corporation, Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, Syngenta Foundation and the Government of Norway, among others are investing millions of dollars in “doomsday seed banks” that will store up to 3 million different varieties of seeds from across the world (Global Research, 28 January 2016).

Although there are some assurances given to Africans that GMF constitute sincere humanitarianism, there are also worries that some universities that do researches including around the GMF are (neo-)colonial institutions some of which [including Wits, Rhodes, UCT,

Pretoria] were set up using proceeds of African disposessions and exploitation, by architects of colonialism such as Cecil John Rhodes (AllAfrica, 2 April 2015; Nyamnjoh, 2016; Warikandwa, Nhemachena and Mpofo, 2017; Nhemachena, Mlambo and Kaundjua, 2016). On this realisation, mind boggling questions arise: “To what extent can the assurance that Africans are given by the GMF through the so-called humanitarian organisations be authenticated? Given that African universities fronting researches on GMF are neo-colonial institutions set up or expanded using proceeds from the (neo-)colonial loots, how can their results be acceptable? Isn’t it that the realisation of the connections between those African institutions that are fronting researches on GMF and GMF corporations make the works of all ‘humanitarian’ organisations dealing with food more suspicious than ever?” Although some Western foundations and NGOs are championing the GMF uptake in Africa (The World Foundation for Natural Science, 2017), there are concerns about their openness and transparency particularly because some of them are associates of biotechnology corporations like Monsanto. The World Foundation for Natural Science (2017) notes that the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, among many charities, is promoting the cultivation of GMOs in Africa acting as spokespersons of Monsanto and other corporations. The biotechnology companies are noted to be partnering with and funding charities to promote GMOs for them as a means to tackle climate change and to feed the hungry. Thus, foundations like the Clinton Foundation are noted as working in Tanzania, Malawi and Rwanda; the Gates Foundation is also noted, by The World Foundation for Natural Science (2017), to own 500 000 shares in Monsanto.

Salient in the above are worries about the secret, invisible connections between charities operating in Africa and the corporations producing GMOs, also salient in all this is the aspect of secrecy and absence of transparency in the charities that connect behind the doors with the biotechnology corporations supplying toxic GMOs to Africa. In this sense, AllAfrica, (2 April 2015) notes a member of a Western secret society as stating that:

Why should we not form a secret society with but one object: the furtherance of the British Empire and the bringing of the whole uncivilised world under British rule, for the recovery of the United States, and for the making of the Anglo-Saxon race but one Empire? Africa is still lying ready for us; it is our duty to take it. It is our duty to seize every opportunity of acquiring more territory and we shall keep this one idea steadily before our eyes: that more territory simply means more of the Anglo-Saxon race, more of the best, the most human, and the most honourable race of the world.

Human Rights Practices and the Hypocrisy of the Global North

The above speaks to hypocrisy in Western regimes of human rights in which some people are considered more human and more honourable than others. Set against a background where Westerners are allowed to own resources not only in their countries but also in Africa; and understood in a context where Africans cannot even own resources on their continent and in their countries, one sees clearly the practices of considering some [Western] human beings as more human than [African] others. Also seen in a context where some human beings are allowed to consume organic foods while others are forced directly and indirectly to consume GMF, one witnesses clearly the colonial practices of considering some [Western] human beings to be more human and more honourable than [African] others. In a context where some [African] human beings are forced to consume animal feeds, one sees clearly the continuation of colonial practices of considering some [Western] people as more human than others. In other words, the domain of food is replete with bitter effects of global food apartheid in which human beings are divided along the lines of what they consume, with some consuming animal feeds while others consume organic human food. This global food apartheid is often paradoxically presented in global “humanitarianism” and philanthropism in terms of the façade of global “humanitarianism” in which those that are defined as “humanitarian” beneficiaries are duplicitously fed with animal feeds, including what is rejected in the countries of origin of that very food.

If human rights include as they do the right to human dignity, one wonders about what happens to the dignity of Africans that are coerced to consume [toxic] GMF or animal feeds. Similarly, if human rights are about the right to freedom of association, one wonders about the attenuated freedoms of Africans to associate with biotechnology corporations that are forcing and foisting themselves onto the continent and into the stomachs of Africans. Equally, if Africans are force-fed with GMF one wonders what happens to freedom of conscience as a human right where Africans' freedom to perform their religious rituals using traditional organic foodstuff is negated. The problem here is that the activism about lack of democracy and human rights abuses in Africa have been narrowly directed against African governments and states yet transnational biotechnology corporations retain the privilege to foist themselves and their toxic products onto Africa. In Africa, the most dangerous leviathan is not necessarily the African states; it is the transnational corporations and their governments that not only force themselves onto African states and governments but also on the African populace making a mockery of civil society hype about democracy, civility and human rights. In the civil society and scholarly productions, the efforts have been narrowly directed at African states that have been described in terms of "state failure" and "state weakness," yet this barking against the African states has served to direct African attention away from the nefarious practices of transnational corporations that have for centuries foisted themselves, exploited and dispossessed Africans who paradoxically have no voting rights, ownership or control in the invasive corporate leviathans. In this sense, even if transnational biotechnology corporations perpetrate genocide via distributing toxic GMF to Africa, the corporations are not subject to the International Criminal Court or the International Criminal Justice where emphasis is placed on states and governments and rebel officials as offenders. The point here is that transnational biotechnology corporations are defined neither as states or government officials nor rebels even when they produce and distribute genocidal toxins to Africa. In fact, the corporate discovery and production of things including toxins are conceived as innovations even if the toxins kill Africans and destroy

their environments. In this sense, there is often a fine line between corporate innovation and rebellion and it is this thin line that is often used by transnational corporation producers of toxins designed to destroy African lives, cultures, epistemologies, economies and politics in the facade of innovation and development.

Writing about GMF, Dizon *et al* (2015: 287) argue that the use of GM foods and GM technology is surrounded by ethical concerns and situational judgement, and should ideally adhere to the ethical standards placed upon food and nutrition professionals, such as beneficence, nonmaleficence, justice and autonomy. Dizon *et al* (2015: 191-2) proceed to state that:

With the surge of GM foods, the notion of ethical eating has surfaced. Ethical eating focuses on the “moral consequences of food choices”...Ethical eating focuses on morality and consequences of consuming GM foods...In the food industry, ethics is defined as a set of standards that govern or influence the conduct of behaviour of a food/nutrition professional or organisation and can be influenced by food customs and societal norms.

Although The Guardian (9 June 2016) notes that plans by the Nigerian Federal Government to introduce GMOs in Nigeria were accompanied by statements by the National Biosafety Management Agency (NBMA) that it would ensure that potential impacts of GMOs on human, animal health and the environment are carefully weighed and the risk assessment fully carried out before they are released, there are serious challenges in this respect. As noted above, some of the African academics do researches including on GMOs on the basis of research funding from the same biotechnology corporations that produce the GMOs. In fact, Western academics, corporations and governments not only fund researches in Africa but they also set agendas for the researches in which Africa is considered to be a field for (neo-)imperial experiments (Nhemachena *et al*, 2016; Warikandwa *et al*, 2017). The point here is that in much of the funded mega researches on the continent, Africans serve as informants, and as research assistants in prefabricated research agendas defined by the Western funders who then call the tune for the African pipers

they have paid (Nyamnjoh, 2004). In this sense, the connections between researchers and the corporations producing GMOs is cause for worries in the moral, academic and ethical senses.

In terms of control measures for GMF, UNESCO (2014: 1) notes that currently, the World Food Programme's (WFP) quality control measures do not take a stand on the concept of genetically modified organisms. It is also noted that in a 2002 statement, the UN Special Envoy stated that:

...so long as a GMO passed the regulations in place for international food trade that they could be used by the WFP to aid the populations in need for the time being until the UN could establish a long term policy and that ultimately the decision was that of the individual governments.

We argue here that while the responsibility for testing and certifying GMOs is placed on African governments, the same African governments have been financially incapacitated by the Western sponsored economic structural adjustment programmes and transnational corporations that have retrenched African states and governments from policy and from the economy. Yet, even if the responsibility for testing and certifying GMF was placed on the United Nations, the challenge is that even the United Nations is in association with the big transnational corporations some of which fund UN programmes and projects (Nhemachena and Warikandwa, 2017).

Thus, while UNESCO (2014: 2) notes that the CODEX Alimentarius which was established in 1963 by FAO and WHO dictates the international standards for food that is traded internationally, there is a challenge in the sense that the same UN agencies and arms are often funded by the same corporations producing the GMF. Similarly, although it is noted by UNESCO (2014: 2) that there is another primary treaty, the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety, which the international trade of GM foods has to go through, the challenge is that the same transnational biotechnology corporations fund UN programmes and projects, and so control the UN agendas. Yet even if the United Nations leaves the decision on

the use of GM foods [such as in southern Africa] to the nation states, the challenge remains that even nation states are captured by global transnational corporations that have garnered even more power and control with the introduction of economic structural adjustment programmes in Africa.

Although there are international instruments to cover a broad range of issues such as aquaculture, release of GMOs into the environments, international trade, human health, food safety, labelling of food and intellectual property, associated with GMOs, some of them are nonbinding (Dunham, 2011: 329). For Stewart (2009), the Biosafety Protocol-Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety excludes the US, Canada and Argentina, all major GMO producers. The protocol, which resulted from environmental NGO pressure, established requirements for international shipments of GMO plants and foods, including requirement for advanced informed consent by importing countries to shipments of GMO seeds and plants and the provision of a risk assessment with respect to such products by the shipper. It also established requirements for international shipments of GM products and requires the adoption of appropriate domestic biosafety regulations by parties. The Protocol also expects parties to consider socio-economic aspects arising from the impact of GMOs on the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity. The opposition to GMOs has been driven by concerns over the impact of GM technologies on the agricultural sector and traditional farming practices; the fear that farmers and society as a whole will become dependent for seed/food supply on a few multinational corporations; a related fear of economic exploitation by these firms; the perceived threat posed by GMOs to food as a cultural value; and the view that genetic manipulation is unethical or sacrilegious (Dunham 2011: 331).

Conscious of the ways in which GMOs can be used to intentionally kill human beings through what is known as bioterrorism, Malaysia is noted by Majid (2012) as having introduced the Biosafety Act in 2007 and the Strategic Trade Act of 2010 to cover all biological agents and address bioterrorism. Unlike in the Cartagena Protocol, Fresco (2001) notes that FAO deals with environmental and food risk-assessment questions under a more

general concept of “biosecurity”. Biosecurity is defined by FAO to cover pests, diseases and invasive alien species; thus there exists FAO-biosecurity strategic and integrated approaches that encompass the policy and regulatory frameworks for managing relevant risks to human, animal and plant life and health, and associated risks to the environment. Defining biosecurity, the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) views it as “institutional and personal security measures and procedures designed to prevent the loss, theft, misuse, diversion or intentional release of pathogens, or parts of them or toxins producing organisms, as well as toxins that are held, transferred and or supplied by Biological Resource Centres (BRCs).

Apart from the Cartagena Protocol mentioned above, Stewart (2009: 13) notes that for the WTO, domestic GMO regulations affecting trade in GM crops and foods are subject to the disciplines of the WTO, GATT, Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS) and Technical Barrier Trade (TBT) Agreements. Stewart (ibid) also notes the existence of CODEX which is composed of national delegations from its 165 member states and that the stated purpose of CODEX is to protect consumers’ health and ensure fair practices in the food trade. It seeks to promote the adaptation of uniform EHS standards for internationally traded food products through a complex, highly structured process of discussion and consensus among member states, representatives including experts, recently, business, and non-governmental organisation (NGO) representatives have been allowed to attend and participate in discussions of the standard committees. However, acceptance by member states of CODEX standards is voluntary. Stewart (2009: 14) further notes that in 1999 CODEX established the ad hoc intergovernmental Task Force on Foods Derived from biotechnology to consider the health and nutritional implications of such foods and develop standards, guidelines or recommendations, as appropriate, for foods derived from biotechnology or traits introduced into foods by biotechnology.

The human rights issues of doling out GMF are arguably most poignant in matters concerning the rights of indigenous people whose stomachs are force-fed with GMOs and whose physical, cultural, and social environments are invaded and polluted by GMOs

and chemicals associated with their use. We argue that these matters speak to the rights of indigenous people to self-determination, particularly the right to determine what one eats. The indigenous people's rights to their own seed-banks are effaced by the invasive GMOs that pollute local indigenous species. In this vein, Woodley *et al* (2009: 4-6) note that:

The 2007 UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous peoples and the 1989 ILO Convention No 169 call on states to respect indigenous lands and territories and proclaim the right of indigenous peoples' cultural identity and well-being, can be enhanced through recognition of customary tenure rules and practices... Genetic Use Restriction Technologies (GURTs), colloquially known as "terminator seeds' could lead to possible loss of crop variety, locally adapted genetic material and wild relatives, the displacement of traditional farming systems and the social cultural and spiritual dimensions associated with these, including storage, exchange and cultural uses of seeds and seed-bearing plants... Article 29 of the (non-binding) 2007 UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples states that indigenous peoples are entitled to the recognition of the full ownership, control and protection of their cultural and intellectual property. They have the right to special measures to control, develop and protect their sciences, technologies and cultural manifestations, including human and other genetic resources, seeds, medicines, knowledge of the properties of fauna and flora...

As far as indigenous people are concerned, biotechnology is colonial and repressive in various senses. It is colonial and repressive in that it suppresses African indigenous food technology and so it perpetuates the myths of African technological inferiority (Schmidt 2006: 174-5, Whyte 2016). In North America, food sovereignty movements evoke cultural revitalisation and political sovereignty, a missing movement that Africa should embrace to resist and fight GMO deployment on its people and environments. We argue that cultural revitalisation and political sovereignty are important for Africa to ensure the safeguarding of the people's rights and dignity as well as the safety of the African environments. Food sovereignty

is a strategy of indigenous resurgence that negotiates structures of settler colonialism that erase ecological value of certain foods for indigenous peoples. Also, biotechnology just like colonial era practices undermines the foodways of indigenous people and it makes them reliant on markets based on the food economy (Burnett *et al*, 2016). Biotechnology disrupts just like the earlier European colonisers, the indigenous political, economic, kinship, legal and religious orders in ways that also destabilise indigenous food security by limiting availability, controlling access and regulating utilisation of indigenous lands and resources (McMillan, 2015). More importantly, we contend that genetic engineering not only threatens the extinction of indigenous people whose blood and tissue samples are often collected under the Human Genome Diversity Project (Bramford 2007), but also the alteration of Aboriginal genealogies has been shown to result in indigenous people's misery and damaging loss of ancestry (de la Torre *et al* 2009: 38; Mawani, 2005: 316).

Conclusion

This chapter focused on the use of genetically modified food in Africa, which the Global North is allegedly using to cull the human race, worse still to stifle the rights of the people of the Global South. We have argued that the direct and indirect threats to indigenous human genetic constitutions through the deployment of GMOs by transnational corporations and their governments replicate colonial wishes to destroy genealogies of Africans and other indigenous people; in this vein current efforts to alter genetic constitutions of Africans are meant to facilitate (neo-)colonial ambitions to erase African identities that form the basis for claims of restitution and repossession of colonially looted land and other resources (Nhemachena, 2016). In this chapter, we have argued further that altering the genetic constitutions of Africa is meant to ensure loss of indigenous African identities and with them loss of indigenous African politics, cultures, religions and economies-it is a replication of colonial losses for Africans. Loss of clear original genealogical identities logically implies loss of claims to heritages in so far as they are premised on the original African genealogies and identities. In

this sense, GMF humanitarianism is humanitarianism that purports to be philanthropic while in fact it disinherits Africans and renders them as people without genealogies and original African identities. In other words, genetic modification denies the right to identity which is central to all claims including claims for human rights. In so far as the right to life, right to freedom of association, freedom of assembly, freedom of movement, freedom from torture, right to dignity and so on are reliant on possession of clear identities, affronts to [clear] African identities are also necessarily affronts to African human rights. In short, to be given food that is [contentious and] toxic is to be denied human rights including by those that purport to be extending humanitarianism in Africa.

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Drinking to Death? The Proliferation of Illicit Mozambican Alcoholic Spirits in 21st Century Zimbabwe

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Introduction

During the new millennium, new trends in the consumption of alcohol began to emerge among a considerable number of Zimbabwean citizens, mostly the subaltern, whose common denominator was their unenviable condition of marginalisation, impoverishment, joblessness, underemployment, grinding poverty, despair and disillusionment. This chapter explores the trade and consumption of illicit alcoholic spirits smuggled from Mozambique in the context of the Zimbabwean crisis during the 21st century. It focuses on the highly potent alcoholic spirits of Mozambican origin that were smuggled into Zimbabwe where their sale and consumption became rampant despite being outlawed by the authorities. These intoxicants were trafficked to various parts of the country by networks of clandestine syndicates from the late 2000s at a time when Zimbabwe was experiencing a chronic socio-economic crisis characterised by unprecedented unemployment levels and grinding poverty.

These highly intoxicating spirits, initially known collectively by the street name *krango*, and later *musombodhiya*, by many local drinkers, included Lawidzani, Tentacao, Knock-Out, Zed, Double-Punch and Soldier (*Musoja*) (Muchetu, 19 June 2016; Mwase and Towindo, 24 September 2011; *Press Reader*, 23 November 2015). Most of the intoxicants were made from diluted ethanol and methanol. Ethanol fuel, also known as ethyl alcohol, has a very high alcohol concentration of up to 95% of the content as is the major chemical ingredient found in most of the illicit Mozambican alcoholic spirits (*Sunday Mail*, 11 September 2016).

The agency and ingenuity of some impoverished but alert Zimbabweans was demonstrated by their ability to capitalise on the shortage of clear beer in the country in the year 2007. As the price of clear beer skyrocketed due to the countrywide shortage, some Zimbabweans smuggled potent alcoholic spirits from neighbouring countries such as Mozambique and sold them at relatively cheaper prices in an effort to negotiate a rugged socio-economic terrain. They became very popular among Zimbabwe's under-classes (the marginalised, desperate, underemployed and unemployed citizens), particularly the youths, who preferred them over local alcoholic brands because of their relative cheapness and high potency. In August 2015, the Zimbabwean government indicated that alcohol and drug abuse was most rampant among young adults aged between 15 and 29 years and lowest among people aged 65 years and above (Mudadigwa, 18 January 2016).

This chapter unravels the discordant and ambivalent relationship between illicit alcohol commerce and consumption in Zimbabwe's decimated socio-economic landscape. It argues that while the commerce involving the trafficking and selling of outlawed and highly intoxicating alcoholic beverages (or spirits) of Mozambican origin is largely a blessing to considerable numbers of marginalised Zimbabweans who eked sustenance from it, the same cannot be said of the consumers and the society in general whose health and general well-being are severely destabilised. In realistic terms, these alcoholic spirits are a curse to those who imbibe in them. They offered no meaningful and lasting panacea to the predicament of the consumers. Lamentably, societal discord emerges countrywide in the form of a pervading culture of insobriety among the generality of the population, widespread alcohol-related health problems, violence and early deaths, among other ills.

Situating the study in discourses of alcohol abuse and consumption behaviour

Theories on the causes of alcohol abuse

In 1849, Magnus Huss, a Swedish medical doctor, became the first person to use the term 'alcoholism' to refer to alcohol abuse

(Tabakoff and Hoffman, 2013). Jellinek (1960) went on to define an alcoholic as a person whose consumption of alcohol had the potential to cause harm to oneself and the society in general. This section will examine some of the theories that have been advanced to explain the causes of alcohol abuse and assess their relevance to this study.

The Disease Theory of Alcoholism was pioneered by Thomas Trotter (1760-1832), a Scottish physician. In one of his scholarly works published long after his death, Trotter (1988) argued that alcohol abuse is a disease. Adding on to Trotter's work, Benjamin Rush (1745-1813), an American physician, became the first person to use the term 'addiction' to refer to habitual drinking which he characterised as a disease (Levine, 1985). He regarded alcoholism as a medical illness or addiction that is difficult to control (Leonard and Blane, 1999; Leshner, 2003). Elvin Morton Jellinek (1960), a psychiatrist and the Director of the Centre of Alcohol Studies at the Yale Medical School in the United States, also saw alcoholism as a medical disease emanating from the brain. To most advocates of the Disease Theory of Alcoholism, alcohol abuse is one's mental incapacity to control drinking instincts (Valverde, 1998). The Genetic/Hereditary Theory is derived from the Disease Theory of Alcoholism. This theory acknowledges that alcoholism is a disease and argues that genes can determine whether or not one becomes an alcoholic (Leshner, 2003).

Given the rampant abuse of imported alcoholic spirits in Zimbabwe, the Disease Theory seems to suggest the existence of a contagious medical/brain disease of epidemic proportions across the country since the first decade of the 21st century. This sounds improbable to say the least. This theory fails to explain why it was mostly the illicit imported alcoholic spirits than other brands that were being abused in Zimbabwe. The theory is also silent on the reasons behind the prevalence of alcohol abuse during specific periods in history, and not in others. In addition, it also fails to explain why illicit brews were abused mostly by the youths as compared to other groups in 21st century Zimbabwe. This theory trivialises the importance of environmental causes of alcoholism which are quite relevant to this study.

The Environmental (Social Learning) Theory argues that alcoholism results from environmental circumstances (Peele, 1984). These environmental factors include socio-economic hardships such as neglect, ill-treatment and poverty (Leonard and Blane, 1999; Lipsey and Derzon, 1998); and influences from family members, peers, friends and the media (LaBrie *et.al*, 2007). The central assertion of this theory is that alcoholism is a consequence of one's desire to cope with environmental dynamics and challenges (Botvin, Schinke, Epstein and Diaz, 1994; Cooper, Russell and George, 1988; Wall, Thrussell and Lalonde, 2003).

The Environmental Theory also emphasises stress emanating from the environmental challenges as one of the most important causes of alcohol abuse. The Strain Theory, pioneered by Robert Merton, was derived from the Environmental Theory. It argues that environmental challenges may lead to psychological conditions of stress which make some people to abuse alcohol as a coping mechanism (Botvin, Schinke, Epstein and Diaz, 1994; Cooper, Russell and George, 1988; Wall, Thrussell and Lalonde, 2003). Wall and Kohl (2007) reiterate that deviant behaviour can be caused by one's frustration to a problem which he or she fails to resolve. Thus, deviant forms of behaviour such as alcoholism are attempts by some people to cope with, or address, their stress.

Environmental factors are very relevant to this study if one closely examines the socio-economic dynamics that prevailed in Zimbabwe from the first decade of the 21st century when the abuse of illicit imported alcoholic spirits, most of which were smuggled from Mozambique, became rampant. From the year 2000, Zimbabwe was engulfed in a socio-economic quagmire characterised by deindustrialisation, unprecedented unemployment levels, hyperinflation, shortages of consumer goods (including beer from 2007), persistent droughts and chronic poverty, among other things (Chiumbu and Musemwa, 2012; Duri, 2012; Duri, 2016; Meredith, 2002; Richardson, 2005). As will be noted later on in this chapter, it was not mere coincidence that the abuse of illicit imported brews became widespread, particularly among the youth, during this time of crisis in Zimbabwe. It becomes apparent, therefore, that environmental dynamics are very relevant in accounting for the

rampant abuse of prohibited foreign spirits from the first decade of the new millennium.

Theories of consumption behaviour

The theories of alcoholism have to be examined in conjunction with those pertaining to consumption in general in order to fully contextualise this study. This is because consumption behaviour also determines whether or not one becomes an alcoholic. As an example, some people with the propensity to become alcoholics because of environmental factors may not turn out to be so because of prohibitions imposed upon their consumption behaviour by issues such as depressed incomes. In addition, theories of consumption patterns also help to explain why some people preferred certain alcoholic brands over others.

In 1936, John Maynard Keynes, a British economist, proposed the Absolute Income Theory of Consumption. He argued that the absolute size of income determines consumption choices and behaviour. In this case, absolute income implied one's current earnings (Colander, 1986; Lindauer, 1976; Storey, 2017). Keynes' theory is relevant to this study because, as shall be shown in this chapter, many Zimbabweans who were unemployed or had no regular means of income settled for the relatively less expensive alcoholic spirits of Mozambican origin. Given their limited sources of income, most consumers drank communally after contributing little amounts of hard-earned money to buy a small quantity of the illicit brew. In addition, they settled for the highly potent spirits, most of which were of Mozambican origin, in order to get intoxicated within the shortest possible time and at a relatively cheaper cost, given their impoverished condition.

James Stemble Duesenberry, an American economist, proposed the Relative Income Theory of Consumption in 1949. He stated that consumption behaviour is not the outcome of one's absolute income but a person's income in relation to that of other people and the society in general. He also noted that many individuals and families imitate the consumption behaviour of their peer and neighbours with similar levels of income (Bagozzi, Gurhan-Canli and Priester, 2009; Storey, 2017). As will be noted later in this chapter, this theory is

applicable to some of the dynamics of alcoholism involving the consumption of illicit imported spirits in 21st century Zimbabwe. It shall be noted, for example, that peer influences sometimes played a critical role in determining alcohol consumption patterns and choices. Among other things, this chapter will show that some unemployed youths often convened gatherings where they shared illicit brews while discussing possible remedies to their common/relative plight of impoverishment. In this case, one of the major reasons that made them to drink together was their relative/common condition of deprivation.

Milton Friedman, an American economist and the Head of the Chicago Monetary School of Economics, developed the Permanent Income Hypothesis in 1957. Unlike Keynes, he posited that consumption patterns are determined by one's normal or permanent rather than current income. In other words, his argument was that long term or anticipated income influences the manner in which people make their consumption plans (Slater, 1997; Smart, 2010; Storey, 2017). Thus, people try their best to maintain a consistent standard of living despite varying levels of income and fortunes (Storey, 2017). The implication of this theory to this study is that people take into account the income they anticipate to get in the future to make decisions on the nature of alcohol they consume in the present. With the future of most Zimbabweans, particularly the youth, on ice owing to the inexorable socio-economic meltdown, many consumers chose to settle for less expensive but highly intoxicating brews. In 21st century Zimbabwe, the future of most citizens always looked bleak with unemployment and poverty levels rising by the day. Given the predicament of an uncertain future, a significant number of Zimbabweans settled for cheaper intoxicants even on isolated occasions when they had some money that could afford the cost of more expensive brands.

In 1963, Franco Modigliani, an Italian economist and naturalised American, and Albert Ando, a Japanese-born economist resident in the United States, advanced the Life Cycle Theory of Consumption. Their argument was that a person's consumption behaviour in any given period of time is not determined by current income but the whole income anticipated in a lifetime (Slater, 1997; Smart, 2010;

Storey, 2017). It should be noted that these arguments are derived from Friedman's Permanent Income Hypothesis. The two theories and their implications to this study are therefore very similar.

This section has contextualised the study in some of the discourses pertaining to alcohol abuse and consumption behaviour. As far as discourses on the causes of alcoholism are concerned, it has been noted that environmental factors are very relevant to the Zimbabwean situation during the 21st century. The theories of consumption behaviour discussed in this section are also very relevant to a study of this nature. They all highlight the primacy of income and affordability in determining the dynamics of alcohol consumption. The theories on the causes of alcohol abuse and those on factors determining consumption behaviour and patterns explored above offer useful insights and a valuable framework that will inform and guide this study.

Commercialisation and rampant consumption of illicit Mozambican alcoholic spirits in 21st century Zimbabwe

The smuggling of alcoholic spirits from neighbouring countries into Zimbabwe for purposes of earning livelihoods has a considerably long history spanning back to the colonial period that ended with the attainment of independence in 1980. During the colonial period, *nipa*, an illicit alcoholic spirit with an alcohol content of almost 100% that was brewed in Mozambique, was often smuggled into Rhodesia (colonial Zimbabwe) where, because of its relatively cheap price and high potency, it found a ready market among many poor, underemployed and unemployed Africans in many border towns such as Umtali (*Umtali Post*, 7 October 1955). Most of the Africans who smuggled and traded the brew were the unemployed and those from low-income groups who sought to eke livelihoods in a colonial dispensation characterised by grinding poverty (Duri, 2012a).

As early as 1905, the Mining Commissioner for Umtali complained that Africans from the town were "in the habit of crossing the border to obtain drink. I know that crime has resulted therefrom, and I also know that drink has been brought back from

these places” (National Archives of Zimbabwe (NAZ), 12 December 1905, File MU2/3/15). In February 1935, the Umtali Native Welfare Society noted that “Umtali town natives obtain beer, and even spirits, easily in Portuguese (Mozambican) territory” (*Umtali Advertiser*, 21 February 1935: 3). In October 1939, the Criminal Investigations Department (CID) expressed concern at the rising popularity of Mozambican-sourced *nipa* among Umtali’s African residents (NAZ, 16-19 October 1939, File S1224/4). In his Annual Report for 1970, Umtali’s Director of African Administration stated that large quantities of *nipa*, mostly sourced from Mozambique, continued to be seized by the police from African homes in Umtali’s Sakubva Township. He reported that this “horrible concoction” was being brought into Sakubva and sold in ‘nip’ bottles (*Umtali Post*, 9 November 1970: 3). In 1970 alone 27 Africans, three of them women, were convicted for the offence (*Umtali Post*, 9 November 1970).

This historical background illustrates that illicit brews which were relatively less expensive were usually smuggled into the country mostly by the downtrodden sections of the society who sold them in order to eke livelihoods in inhospitable socio-economic environments. The major consumers of such brews were also largely drawn from the relatively marginalised sections of the population who could not afford the cost of expensive brands (Duri, 2012a). Similar trends were to be witnessed in the post-independence period, particularly during times of debilitating socio-economic challenges.

The selling of illicit spirits, mostly of Mozambican origin, in urban, peri-urban and rural areas across Zimbabwe became a popular way of earning income by some marginalised people from the first decade of the 21st century when the majority of the population lived in abject poverty. In 2007 and 2008, when Zimbabwe ran out of beer, the smuggling of Mozambican alcoholic beverages into the country became a popular source of income. The beer scarcity was largely caused by the shortage of foreign currency to import various inputs needed in the brewing and packaging of the commodity (Mwase and Towindo, 24 September 2011). The most common Mozambican spirits which were smuggled into the country were Lawidzani, Tentacao, Knock-Out, Zed, Double-Punch (Mwase and Towindo,

24 September 2011) and Soldier (*Musoja*) (Group Interview with Machipanda, Makuyana and Moyo, 10 December 2016).

Most of the smuggled beer was sold in shebeens, at domestic premises, and along the streets (Maturu, Interview: 2 May 2009). In September 2011, “mobile bars” which were run by itinerant vendors selling imported illicit alcoholic spirits were a common feature in Zimbabwe (Mwase and Towindo, 24 September 2011: 1). By the year 2012, Tentacao had become very popular in Bulawayo (*Chronicle*, 6 September 2012). In Harare’s Dzivarasekwa Suburb, *musombodhiya* had become a “drink of choice” by November 2015 (*Press Reader*, 23 November 2015: 1).

The sale of prohibited spirits, as some vendors confirmed, was brisk business that significantly alleviated their plight. Pasipanodya Muzhandamure, a 24-year-old Harare street vendor, stated in September 2011 that he earned a living by selling illicit Mozambican spirits to fellow vendors, commuter omnibus rank marshals and street kids (Mwase and Towindo, 24 September 2011). In September 2011, some roadside vegetable vendors in Harare’s Mabvuku Suburb stated that they also sold cheap illicit imported spirits because they made brisk business. They said they could sell spirits worth up to US\$30 on a busy day (Mwase and Towindo, 24 September 2011). In October 2012, some vendors along Fifth Avenue in Bulawayo confirmed that they smuggled illicit spirits all the way from Mozambique and managed to reach their destinations after bribing Zimbabwe Revenue Authority (ZIMRA) officials at Forbes Border Post and police details manning roadblocks along the 600-kilometre highway from Mutare to Bulawayo. Such corrupt initiatives, they said, were necessary because selling illicit spirits made good business in Bulawayo. Thabani Sibanda who sold Zed and Tentacao along the streets in Bulawayo’s city centre during the year 2012, for example, stated that, “I am a breadwinner and, with unemployment so bad, I survive through this” (*Zimbabwean*, 10 October 2012: 1).

Tentacao was believed to have an alcohol content of 43% and Zed 60% (*Chronicle*, 10 December 2012). Some of the Mozambican concoctions were laced with ethanol and methanol with an alcohol content of up to 95% (Muchetu, 19 June 2016). Most imported Mozambican spirits were prohibited in Zimbabwe, owing to their

high alcohol content which posed several health hazards. In 2012, the stipulated upper limit of alcohol content for all spirits in Zimbabwe was 40% (*Chronicle*, 10 December 2012). In addition, Zimbabwean law prohibited the sale and consumption of alcohol at unlicensed places. Citing the Liquor Act, Inspector James Sabau, the Harare Provincial Police Spokesperson, said in September 2011, “The law is very clear on the illegality of peddling and drinking beer outside the confines of designated places, and anyone caught doing so will have to answer for that” (Mwase and Towindo, 24 September 2011: 1).

Faced with the risk of being detected, apprehended and prosecuted by the law enforcement agents, vendors of illicit imported brews devised a number of strategies to conceal the product while doing business. One strategy was to store the contraband in smaller quantities and at different places. The drink was never advertised by displaying it in public (Separate Interviews with Marumbi, 11 March 2014; Nkomo, 23 March 2014; Regede, 6 March 2014; Shawatu, 28 March 2014; and Vheremu, 28 March 2014). The intoxicants were rarely sold to unknown people for fear of falling into the trap of the authorities or being betrayed by informers. Unfamiliar people could only be entertained if they came along with regular customers who would introduce them to the vendors (Group Interview with Kachimbala, Matiza and Muchingambi, 12 February 2014). In addition, vendors often cautioned their customers never to drink openly. They also regularly advised them to dispose of the empty containers far away from the points of sale (Separate Interviews with Marumbi, 11 March 2014; Nkomo, 23 March 2014; and Regede, 6 March 2014).

It should be noted that the sale of illicit Mozambican alcoholic spirits was one of the several informal livelihood strategies improvised by some impoverished Zimbabweans to negotiate a crisis. While the government criminalised such livelihood initiatives on grounds that they were subterranean economies, the subaltern deliberately flouted the law in order to survive in a harsh socio-economic environment. Thus, the dividing line between issues of criminality and legality increasingly become blurred in subaltern struggles for survival.

Explanation for the rampant abuse of prohibited foreign spirits in Zimbabwe

Drinkers of illicit foreign spirits raised various arguments for taking them. Considerable numbers, as some examples show, argued that intoxication from potent spirits invigorated them, raised their morale and drowned their sorrows during times of anguish and poverty in Zimbabwe. Others stated that they had no option but to take the relatively cheap prohibited foreign brews, owing to the hyperinflationary environment in the country from the year 2000, unemployment, poor remuneration of workers in the formal sector, and general poverty. In such a cash-strapped environment, some drinkers went for brews that intoxicated them within the shortest possible time and at a relatively cheap cost.

Many drinkers of illicit Mozambican alcoholic spirits confirmed that they preferred such intoxicants because they were cheap. They could easily make contributions to buy a bottle and drink communally. A Bulawayo man told the *Chronicle* in September 2012 that, “When we do not have money, we just contribute a few Rands each and we drink” (*Chronicle*, 6 September 2012: 1). Some interviewees stated that with a dollar to buy a 100-millilitre bottle of Zed hard to come by, they often drank communally after making financial contributions. Since the year 2008, a drinking group usually consisted of three to five members and they would each contribute some cents to raise US\$1 to buy a 100-millilitre bottle of Zed at a time (Tawona, 23 January 2013). A regular member who had no money on a given day could be allowed some sips after convincing the others that he would reciprocate within the shortest possible time. Incomers with parasitic tendencies were rarely entertained unless they were either closely related to one of the regular group members, or were known by the group to be having some cash in the very near future (Group Interview with Kachimbala, Matiza and Muchingambi, 12 February 2014).

Being highly intoxicating, the spirits were taken in very small volumes that gave the consumers considerably long hours of drunkenness (Muchetu, 19 June 2016). In January 2016, Ambrose

Makoni, a 30-year-old man from Harare's Manyame Suburb who earned a living by selling illicit Mozambican spirits, said:

It is a very strong beer. Alcohol content is between 30-40%. Normally youths drink the beer because it has high alcohol content so they get drunk faster. If you take 3-4 lids, you will be done that is if you are drinking it undiluted (Mudadigwa, 18 January 2016: 1).

The popularity of illicit Mozambican brews in Zimbabwe was largely rooted in their affordability. A 250-millilitre bottle of Tentacao with 43% alcohol content could keep a person extremely drunk for the whole day and cost only 12 South African Rands in Bulawayo in September 2012 (*Chronicle*, 6 September 2012). "I would need less than US\$2 to get drunk whereas I would need about US\$15 if I choose to take lagers," a Mutare man said in August 2013 (*Community News*, 11 August 2013). Some youths from Bulawayo confirmed in December 2013 that they took potent Mozambican brews because the officially-approved brands were expensive in a cash-strapped environment. In December 2013, a 3.75-litre bottle of approved beer with a 5% alcohol content cost US\$1.10 and 750 millilitres of officially-approved Gin with 40% alcohol content cost US\$7. Most of the youths argued that they could not afford the official brands and preferred Zed with well over 43% alcohol content whose 100-millilitre bottle cost US\$1 (Muzenda, 28 December 2013).

In January 2016, Tatenda Maramwidze, an unemployed university graduate, stated that they preferred illicit imported alcoholic spirits because of their relative cheapness: "The drugs we take include Bronco, ZED...The drugs are very cheap and even for a dollar you can get drunk very fast" (Mudadigwa, 18 January 2016: 1). Didza, another drinker from Harare's Highfield Suburb, concurred:

I am drinking this stuff because I have nothing to do. I am not employed. The drink popularly known as *Musombodhiya* comes with guys...So they bring it to us and sell it at 50 cents per 750-millilitre bottles. One bottle is enough for the three and four of us as it needs about five litres to dilute it (Mudadigwa, 18 January 2016: 1).

Elmon Takavada, another Harare youth, also confirmed in January 2016 that, since he was unemployed, he had no choice but to drink the highly potent Mozambican spirits even though they could endanger his health: “We prefer to drink the spirits because they are cheaper. You can get a small job to offload something from a car; maybe you are helping someone to shift from one location to another and you get US\$3 and the next thing you end up buying the spirits” (Mudadigwa, 18 January 2016: 1).

Some professional workers, declassified by socio-economic hardships, acknowledged drinking illicit Mozambican spirits largely because of their affordability and potency in view of their low disposable incomes. In the year 2009, for example, nearly all teachers, nurses, lecturers and casual workers in government service earned a flat US\$100 net salary per month. The net salary for teachers and nurses gradually increased to US\$200 in the year 2010, US\$250 in the period 2011-2013 and US\$350 from the year 2014. With such relatively low salaries, considerable numbers of low-income earners could not afford drinking lagers regularly but only on paydays (Group Interview with Chireni, Mutaka and Mawere, 22 May 2014).

A significant number of consumers working in the informal sector expressed similar sentiments arguing that their relatively low incomes could not afford them expensive drinking on a regular basis (Separate Interviews with Marumbi, 11 March 2014; Nkomo, 23 March 2014; Regede, 6 March 2014; Shawatu, 28 March 2014; and Vheremu, 28 March 2014). Khumalo, a 29-year-old commuter omnibus tout, stated in September 2012 that Tentacao was very popular in Bulawayo because of its relative cheapness compared to lagers. He said, “We do not earn much so we have to buy what we can afford...We just like them because they are cheap” (*Chronicle*, 6 September 2012: 1).

It can be noted that a significant number of consumers preferred illicit Mozambican brews because they were relatively less expensive as compared to local brands. The high levels of unemployment and poverty as well as depressed incomes countrywide left several consumers of alcohol with little option but to drink what they could afford. These arguments confirm the relevance of the theories advanced by Keynes, Duesenberry, Friedman, Modigliani and Ando

examined earlier on in this chapter which underlined the centrality of income levels and affordability in determining consumption patterns and behaviour.

Highly potent brews of foreign origin that were relatively less expensive as compared to local brands were preferred by most drinkers in lowly-paying informal jobs in which intoxication provided the energy and courage to seek livelihoods without sense of shame in a harsh Zimbabwean socio-economic dispensation. Thus, in public discourse, Zed was informally seen as an acronym for “Zimbabwe Energy Drink” (Biriwasha, 1 July 2011: 1). Some touts at bus termini usually took highly potent intoxicants to gain the courage to shamelessly harass and compel commuters into certain vehicles. As some touts confirmed during interviews, such courage was very necessary in order to earn a living during times of hardships (Group Interview with Chinonga, Maringa and Sandaka, 16 March 2014). In September 2011, a Harare tout said he preferred the “illicit mix” to the conventional alcoholic beverages because of its potency saying, “The nature of our trade requires that we remain sloshed most of the day, so in terms of results, this kind of stuff is the best” (Mwase and Towindo, 24 September 2011: 1).

For some impoverished Zimbabweans, extreme intoxication afforded them the opportunity to “douse off the flames of frustration” (Hungwe, 16 October 2015: 1). In September 2012, Khumalo, a 29-year-old Bulawayo commuter omnibus tout, stated that, “After drinking (Tentacao), we are relieved from our daily problems and our morale will always be high” (*Chronicle*, 6 September 2012: 1). Similar sentiments were expressed by a man from the south-eastern town of Chipinge in January 2013 who said, “...I am unemployed and I have no income, yet I also need to drown my sorrows in alcohol. I have no option...so I just buy my Zed...and I will be intoxicated until mid-morning the following day” (Zuweni, 25 January 2013: 1).

In January 2016, Tatenda Maramwidze, an Economics graduate who had failed to secure employment since graduating from the university in 2013, confirmed that most frustrated youths were indulging in drug and alcohol abuse in order to drown their sorrows:

The drugs help us to forget our misery. It is not that easy to be looked after by your parents, years after graduation. Because of this pressure, we end up doing drugs so that we can get drunk and forget our problems (Mudadigwa, 18 January 2016: 1).

Thus, many sections of the Zimbabwean population resorted to alcohol abuse owing to their debilitating sense of frustration and despair at a time when their optimism of ever living a decent life was wilting inexorably. These sentiments expressed by drinkers are in line with the Social Learning (Environmental) and Strain theories explored earlier on in this chapter. Among other things, as already noted, these theories emphasised the importance of environmental challenges and the desire to get rid of stress as some of the major causes of alcoholism.

Idleness and loneliness arising from conditions of unemployment and poverty frustrated some people to the extent of seeking solace through drinking in the company of counterparts with similar challenges. A number of interviewees confirmed that such drinking congregations were quite comforting because they shared their common experiences and discussed employment opportunities (Separate Interviews with Masitara, 11 February 2014; Shawatu, 28 March 2014; and Vheremu, 28 March 2014). Thus, to a number of informants, illicit beer gatherings played an important social function of bringing together impoverished people to discuss their plight and avoid the boredom of loneliness at home and along the streets (Group Interview with Chireni, Mutaka and Mawere, 22 May 2014). These lived realities resonate with Duesenberry's Relative Income Theory of Consumption discussed earlier on in this chapter which posits that persons of similar income levels or predicaments tend to find common ground such as imitating each other's consumption behaviour. In short, the adage 'Birds of the same feather flock together' aptly captures this scenario.

Despite the psychological and sociological arguments advanced by some drinkers for preferring illicit spirits of foreign origin over local ones, the relative cheapness of the highly potent brews appears most convincing. This is largely because in Zimbabwe's socio-economic environment where unemployment and poverty rates were

high and disposable incomes miserably low, the choice of an alcoholic brand largely depended on its affordability. One would not be able to drown sorrows by settling for a brand he or she could not afford no matter how tasty or potent it was.

Impact of illicit foreign alcoholic spirits on the Zimbabwean society

The claims by many impoverished drinkers that their consumption of illicit imported spirits was a cost-saving measure with psychological and sociological benefits can hardly be justified, considering the profound negative effects it had on individuals and the socio-economic fabric in general. The relative cheapness and potency of the spirits resulted in the prevalence of alcoholism among many consumers, a development that had far-reaching negative implications for Zimbabwe's prospects for socio-economic recovery propelled by a healthy and disciplined labour force.

The irony of abusing illicit Mozambican brews by many frustrated Zimbabweans on grounds of drowning sorrows of joblessness, hunger, destitution and general poverty is that, while alcoholism could afford them some form of solace, it actually generated more challenges such as exposing them to severe health hazards, most of which had destabilising consequences on the society as a whole. A medical doctor confirmed during an interview that the abuse of spirits poses serious health hazards which decimate the general social fabric (Chizaza, Interview: 16 March 2013). Medical tests to ascertain, and possibly establish, links between the consumption of illicit brews on the one hand, and the health, physiological and psychological condition of the individual consumers on the other hand, could not be carried out in this study. Rather, this study sought to capture the lived experiences of some consumers of illicit Mozambican spirits, some of whom were either interviewed or observed, and the general societal attitudes towards them.

Potent brews with high alcohol content damage the body system in various ways. They can have a corrosive effect on the digestive system and generate or aggravate ailments such as ulcers. Terminal illnesses such as liver cirrhosis are largely caused by excessive alcohol

consumption (Chizaza, Interview: 16 March 2013). In July 2011, a medical doctor at Harare's Avenues Clinic lamented the disastrous impact of imported illicit alcoholic spirits on health saying, "This is poison and it is killing our youth. With these brands now becoming more popular among the young, it is time we looked at the health risks they are causing" (Alcoholics Anonymous, 14 July 2011: 1). A senior nurse at Chipinge Hospital warned in January 2013 that, "Alcohol in general has its negative effects. However, due to the high alcohol concentration in the illicit beer, one becomes vulnerable to kidney ailments and liver cirrhosis, among a string of other problems" (Zuweni, 25 January 2013: 1). Many consumers are known to have suffered from impaired speech after taking highly potent spirits over the years (Muchetu, 19 June 2016). In addition to these complications, Doctor Patrick Mhaka of Parirenyatwa Hospital stated that the abuse of illicit spirits caused inflammation of the pancreas (Biriwasha, 1 July 2011).

The abuse of alcohol can also have negative physiological effects on the body system. It can cause severe dehydration which may result in the general loss of energy. As Muchetu (19 June 2016: 1) observed: "*Musombodhiya* is consumed in very small quantities as it gives the consumer hours of drunkenness and often a time they 'stick' where the consumer will not be able to move their body parts and resemble a zombie as the alcohol stiffens their body for hours on end." Thus, highly potent spirits are generally energy-draining and usually result in body exhaustion. In October 2011, Onwell Muzawazi (5 October 2011: 1) bemoaned: "It is slowly becoming a norm in our beloved society to come across a man sleeping by the wayside like dead wood after taking a few cups of the illegal Zed beer which is circulating heavily on the informal or black market." Problem Masawu (26th October 2013: 1) concurred during the same month: "It is not unusual to find people sweating profusely while sleeping soundly on pavements owing to the potency of either cough mixtures or illicit brews like Zed and Lawidzani. In October 2013, Chief Mutambara, from Chimanimani District in south-eastern Zimbabwe, lamented that most youths in his area collapsed and died after taking Zed (Masawu, 26th October 2013).

Such de-invigorating effects of alcoholism may have negative implications on an individual's work ethics. Alcohol abuse and addiction usually de-energise the body and incapacitate one's ability to perform constructive work. Terrible morning hangovers, for example, are largely caused by dehydration of the body system and usually develop retiring attitudes towards work within individuals. In December 2013, Alcoholics Anonymous, a private organisation that monitored drinking habits and their consequences on health, warned that most unemployed youths in Zimbabwe were becoming alcoholics who did not find time to do meaningfully productive work (Muzenda, 28 December 2013). In his survey of Harare in 2015, Hungwe (16 October 2015), a Zimbabwean lawyer and freelance journalist for the British Broadcasting Corporation, observed that most consumers of highly potent illicit Mozambican spirits looked sedated, helpless and sleepy. Consequently, most Zimbabwean youths who abused illicit alcoholic spirits constituted "a wasted generation" that was "idle and dying" (Hungwe, 16 October 2015: 1). Such physiological conditions result in poor work ethics that militate against the prospects of Zimbabwe's socio-economic recovery (Chizaza, Interview: 16 March 2013).

The physiological and general health problems related to alcohol abuse can largely be blamed for some fatal incidents that took place in various parts of the country immediately after some consumers had taken a lot of illicit imported spirits. Medical research indicates that methanol, the main chemical ingredient found in most of the alcoholic spirits smuggled from Mozambique, damages the central nervous system and can cause blindness, coma and death if consumed in excess amounts (*Sunday Mail*, 11 September 2016). In Zimbabwe's public domain, as Biriwasha noted in 2011, Zed, for example, was sometimes nicknamed as an acronym for "Zimbabwe Emergency Death" or "Zimbabwe Early Death" because of its lethal effects on human life (Biriwasha, 1 July 2011: 1).

In December 2009, for example, a man from Mukumbura District died after consuming a lot of Lawidzani spirit (*AllAfrica.com*, 30 December 2009). In November 2012, Forward Chindedza, a teacher at Chitora Primary School in Manicaland Province, was found dead in a classroom after excessively consuming Zed. He was

discovered bleeding from the nose and mouth by the school's security guard (*My Zimbabwe News*, 10 December 2012). In December 2012, Christopher Nyanhongo, a 77-year-old man from Chidawanyika Village under Chief Mutasa who had spent the whole day drinking Zed at Govhingo Business Centre, died after falling unconscious on the bar veranda (*My Zimbabwe News*, 10 December 2012). Charles Tizora, a Harare man, collapsed and died on 1 March 2013, at the corner of Mbirimi and Daniel Streets in Mbare Suburb after drinking several bottles of Zed (*Nehanda Radio*, 8 March 2013). During the same month Chunky Zengeya, a Harare man about 40 years old, was found dead at Areno Shopping Centre in Kambuzuma Suburb after drinking a lot of Zed (*ZBC News*, 13 March 2013). In May 2013, Fungayi Tendwa, a 23-year-old man from Demeni Village in Chimanimani District, was found dead near his home after taking several bottles of Zed (*Nehanda Radio*, 8 June 2013).

Excessive consumption of highly potent spirits can have grave psychological consequences. As one psychiatrist confirmed, alcohol abuse and addiction can cause extensive brain damage, a condition which may develop neurotic dispositions in individuals. Some cases of amnesia, violent tendencies and rowdy behaviour can be linked directly to mental dislocation emanating from alcohol abuse (Mangezi, Interview: 24 April 2013). Patrick Mhaka, a medical doctor at Parirenyatwa Hospital, confirmed that the abuse of Zed can lead to psychiatric complications such as delusions, paranoia, hallucinations and amnesia (Biriwasha, 1 July 2011).

In January 2016, Mudadigwa, (18 January 2016: 1), a journalist, also noted: "The current upsurge in drug and alcohol abuse among the youth is worrying with reports of several drug-induced psychosis cases at the country's hospitals." Statistics compiled from Zimbabwean hospitals indicated that up to 60% of patients readmitted during the period January 2010 to December 2011 were not new to substance-induced disorders (Zivira, 29 February 2016). In 2015, the Zimbabwe United Nations Association estimated that 65% of Zimbabwean youths suffered from mental challenges related to drug and substance abuse (Zivira, 29 February 2016).

Poor judgement has also been cited as one of the regrettable consequences of alcohol abuse. In their drunken stupor, many youths

are known to have engaged in unprotected sex resulting in unwanted pregnancies and the spread of Sexually-Transmitted Diseases and HIV/AIDS. In some cases, men took advantage of intoxicated women to engage them in unprotected sex. As Sarudzai, a female resident from Chitungwiza's St. Mary's Suburb, stated in December 2016:

Abusing drugs has serious negative consequences on us as women. At times, one can get knocked out to the extent that they lack clear judgment and men can take advantage of that and engage in unprotected sex with such a woman without knowing. This results in unwanted pregnancies and Sexually-Transmitted Diseases (Chogugudza, 13 December 2016: 1).

Medical practitioners and psychiatrists have advised that alcohol abuse can cause belligerent and anti-social disposition. Indeed, there have been incidents of rowdy behaviour and public violence involving consumers of illicit Mozambican intoxicants (Separate Interviews with Jonga, 10 June 2014; and Zhangara, 23 June 2014). In July 2011, a public transport operator in Harare expressed concern at the violent behaviour associated with most consumers of illegal Mozambican intoxicants. He said, "They (Mozambican brews) are very potent and the effect is shattering. You can see the effects on our young men who end up committing acts of violence under the influence (of alcohol)" (Alcoholics Anonymous, 14 July 2011: 1). Touts at bus termini, for instance, became notorious for abusing Mozambican alcoholic spirits after which they harassed commuters and forced them into certain vehicles. Thus, as Towindo observed during the year 2011, "(bus) ranks can prove a very dangerous place to be during the afternoons when most touts and rank marshals are in their cups" (Towindo, 12 February 2011: 1).

Violent clashes often erupted among consumers of illicit Mozambican beer. The causes of most of the violent conflicts may appear petty to an external observer but not to the drunken partners involved, most of whom were often poverty-stricken and frustrated and to whom every cent counted. It was common for members of a drinking group to engage in fierce brawls after accusing each other

of taking more sips than others (Separate Interviews with Marumbi, 11 March 2014; Nkomo, 23 March 2014; Regede, 6 March 2014; Shawatu, 28 March 2014; and Vheremu, 28 March 2014). Nasty fist-fights sometimes erupted after drinkers withheld beer from some partners who had not contributed money towards the purchase of the communal drink. Violent clashes also took place between drinking partners and thirsty gate-crashers (Separate Interviews with Marumbi, 11 March 2014; Masitara, 11 February 2014; Regede, 6 March 2014; and Shawatu, 28 March 2014).

Some incidents of domestic violence and the disruption of interpersonal relationships within families have been attributed to alcoholism in general and the abuse of illicit spirits in particular. Doctor Timothy Stamps, the then Health Advisor to the Zimbabwean government, stated in September 2012 that “Consumption of alcohol should be controlled by the individual because domestic violence is frequently associated with it” (Langa, 26 September 2012: 1). According to the ZRP Victim Friendly Unit, cases of domestic violence in Zimbabwe rose from 1 940 in the year 2008 to 10 871 in the year 2012. This sharp increase was largely attributed to the high prevalence of alcohol abuse and the prevailing harsh socio-economic conditions (*Manica Post*, 22 January 2014). In December 2013, Mrs Lena Chirawa from Mutare’s Sakubva Suburb, articulated the linkage between alcoholism and domestic violence saying:

People are badly abusing alcohol these days and other substances that impair their thinking. This often results in quarrels at home which, at times, become physical. Instead of knowing how to handle drunken husbands, some women become aggressive and turn violent (*Manica Post*, 22 January 2014: 1).

As the United Nations International Drug Control Programme (1995) noted, women who are not alcohol and drug abusers may face problems from drug-abusing men. In a case heard at the Harare Civil Court on 27 February 2013, for example, Esnath Katswanda sought a protection order against Samson Katswanda, her 63-year-old husband, who was in the habit of stealing money from her to buy

Zed. She also told the court that Samson beat her whenever he drank Zed. She said, “He beats me up and has a habit of searching all my clothes at home during my absence, especially after I leave for the market where I am a vendor” (Facebook.com, 28 February 2013: 1). Such family disputes involving parents affect the well-being of children. As Muzawazi (5 October 2011: 1) noted: “...Children...experience traumatic scenes (when) their parents are constantly engaging each other in fights. In other words, men are beating up their wives to pulp under the strong influence of Zed.”

In a similar case brought before the Harare Civil Court in September 2016, Irene Muzanenhamo applied for a peace order against Ruzongazi, her husband, on grounds that he often harassed her after drinking an illicit brew known as *Musombodhiya*. Presenting her case, Irene pleaded with the Magistrate as follows:

My husband drinks a beer called *Musombodhiya*. When he gets drunk, we do not get along well. He begins shouting at me in front of our children using vulgar language and I often end up taking refuge at the homes of neighbours...When he comes home drunk while we are in bed with the children, he takes away all the blankets even during the cold season. Kindly assist me Your Worship, otherwise this man will kill me in the near future (Mutsotso, 16 September 2016: 2).

Yeukai Dube, the Presiding Magistrate granted Irene Muzanenhamo a peace order to protect her from being harassed by her husband (Mutsotso, 16 September 2016).

Indulgence in illicit spirits also partly accounts for the prevalence of the rowdy public conduct of most drinkers. In September 2011, Christopher Gandanga, a Harare resident, for instance, observed some aspects of the anti-social conduct associated with illicit brews. He pointed out that, “Vulgar language...and unruly behaviour are some of the social ills associated with beer drinkers and...that will be widespread in the local communities if this problem is allowed to fester” (Mwase and Towindo, 24 September 2011: 1). These sentiments were reiterated by some community elders interviewed in Mutare during the year 2014 when they also deplored the conduct of many consumers of illicit spirits who they accused of using vulgar

language in public more often than not (Separate Interviews with Jonga, 10 June 2014; and Zhangara, 23 June 2014). In most cases, such vulgar insults were directed at innocent women and children. As some social analysts observed, extreme drunkenness from illicit spirits exposes vulnerable groups such as children and women to harassment by disorderly drinkers (Mwase and Towindo, 24 September 2011). Thus, in January 2013, Zimbabwean social commentators castigated Lawidzani and Zed for “tearing the society apart and leaving people licking wounds, both physical and emotional” (Zuweni, 25 January 2013: 1).

An incident of anti-social behaviour by youths who had taken illicit Mozambican spirits was witnessed at a funeral in Harare’s Mbare Suburb during the second week of June 2016. Robin Muchetu (19 June 2016: 1), a Zimbabwean journalist who also attended the funeral, reported:

Funerals have always been associated with a somber mood. The unwritten dictates of African tradition are that people should respect not only the sanctity of life but the dead for they would have departed to the great beyond. Death always reminds people of their inevitable end and mourners are expected to respect the family of the deceased and are very compassionate during this difficult period of bereavement...Last week this reporter attended a funeral in Harare’s oldest township, Mbare...Most of the elderly people were stunned, bewildered, amused and touched by the manner in which the ‘ghetto youths’ behaved. According to them, the funeral was a chance to showcase what the deceased was made of. They said they wanted to show the mourners what he did while he was alive... Although the tradition where a section of the relatives and friends imitate what the deceased used to do in his day is not new in the Shona culture, where it is called *nzveura*, the youths’ behaviour became unbecoming. During the funeral wake, they sang and danced...while drinking alcohol as if it were a party. The challenge is that they were drinking an illicit brew called *musombodhiya* and causing a lot of commotion in the process...Young girls danced in similar movements together with the young men who resembled zombie-like faces as they danced to traditional drums. Chaos was the order of the day as the youths said

the deceased was also in the habit of causing chaos when he attended funeral wakes too...However, at the insistence of the family of the deceased they could not carry out some of their 'rituals.' Normally, they said, they would have taken the coffin of the deceased to the street corners where they spent time with him while he was alive and camp there overnight with the coffin; they would also take a tour of the drinking spots they frequented. However, they said if the deceased had been a commercial sex-worker, the mourners would have been in for a treat. "We were going to come with our condoms and dress in skimpy clothing, drink alcohol and smoke too. We would have done just what she used to do when she was alive. This is how we celebrate the lives of our ghetto heroes and we will not stop at all," said one member of the community. At the cemetery, they poured alcohol inside the grave and also buried a few bottles of it saying the deceased would have a drink too when he felt thirsty...

Reacting to this particular incident, Fortune Charumbira, the President of the Chiefs Council of Zimbabwe, said:

We have never heard of such. It is an abuse of our Zimbabwean culture that you parade a dead person before you bury them. Our culture says when a person dies, he should have one last sleep in the house that he was staying in before his death. You can also have him sleep in the house that was his, say in the rural home only, and not anywhere else. Taking the corpse to a bar, streets or night spots that the deceased frequented is absurd and shows no respect for the dead. If this happens in a chief's area, we will defiantly arrest you and you pay a fine. We reprimand seriously people who do not respect the dead. It is unfortunate that most of these things are happening in the urban areas but as chiefs, we will get to the bottom of it (Muchetu: 19 June 2016: 1).

Concerns were also raised in Zimbabwe's public domain on the negative impact of illicit imported spirits on the conduct of the youths, particularly the school-going children and unemployed school leavers. The abominable conduct of some adults intoxicated by the spirits, it was alleged, sometimes misled the youths to behave

similarly (Separate Interviews with Marere, 16 May 2014; Musena, 12 July 2014; and Rukato, 12 May 2014). In January 2016, for example, Peter Muchengeti, a Harare human rights activist, lamented: “There is a growing and worrisome phenomenon of drug and alcohol abuse by our children mainly due to lack of jobs, idleness and government’s failure to control the illegal entry of intoxicating drinks especially via the Mozambique border” (Mudadigwa, 18 January 2016: 1).

Complaints were also directed at some vendors who sold illicit spirits indiscriminately, even to school-going children, a practice that corrupted the youths. In September 2011, for example, Virginia Mubazangi, a woman from Harare’s Budiriro Suburb, complained that illicit spirits promoted delinquency among children and urged the police to arrest anyone found selling the dangerous substances. She said,

They have seen it proper to leave their previous habitats and invade our homes, exposing our children to very dangerous beverages. These people are just after making profits and they do not care who buys their stuff. They do not look at whether their customers are adults or schoolchildren. The country’s laws are clear and police are not doing enough to curb this ill. The law states that no person under the age of 18 is allowed to purchase alcohol let alone enter premises where alcohol is sold (Mwase and Towindo, 24 September 2011: 1).

In June 2016, a female resident of Harare’s Mbare Suburb expressed extreme disgust at a woman who sold *musombodhiya* in their neighbourhood: “This woman is not ashamed of the fact that she has literally killed a number of young people in this area with the alcohol she sells. She has no sympathy for these young souls she is ruining” (Muchetu, 19 June 2016: 1).

The rampant abuse of prohibited imported spirits by the youths therefore shattered the social fabric thereby frustrating hopes for recovery and prosperity of the nation in the near future. In July 2011, Parirenyatwa Hospital’s Psychiatric Unit warned that alcoholism resulting from taking illicit Mozambican spirits was becoming a critical social problem in Zimbabwe. One official from the unit bemoaned that, “It is just getting out of hand...The future is not

promising if youths take alcohol at this level of intensity. These imported brands are very dangerous and the government needs to do something before our children completely lose their future” (Alcoholics Anonymous, 14 July 2011: 1). Mercy Mkushi, the head of secretariat at the Zimbabwe Alcoholic Beverage Manufacturers’ Association (ZABMA), stated in September 2011 that, “These brews do not only affect adults; the young are also at risk. That is why we are always carrying out campaigns every now and then, especially towards beer-drinking peak times such as public holidays” (Mwase and Towindo, 24 September 2011: 1).

This section has demonstrated that the abuse of drugs and alcohol in 21st century Zimbabwe is “a cycle of evil that continues to diffuse poison in every corner of society” (Chogugudza, 13 December 2016: 1). It becomes apparent that indulgence in prohibited spirits by considerable sections of the population scuttles the prospects of Zimbabwe’s socio-economic recovery in the near future. The relative cheapness of banned potent spirits proves costly to the health, conduct and general social well-being of many consumers and severely compromises attempts to rebuild a new Zimbabwe largely through the efforts of peace-loving, responsible, healthy and production-oriented citizens.

Conclusion

This chapter has unravelled the paradoxical impact of illicit spirits of foreign origin on Zimbabwean society during the new millennium. It has articulated how prohibited substances from abroad can sustain the livelihoods of some citizens while ruining those of others. It has illuminated how, in a country where the majority of the population was besieged by socio-economic hardships characterised by high rates of unemployment, dire poverty, destitution and frustration, some sections of society managed to earn a living through selling alcoholic spirits smuggled from neighbouring countries, particularly Mozambique, despite the risks involved. Given that their future was painfully on ice, they had little option but to salvage a reasonably descent life and acclimatise to a harsh socio-economic environment.

Being relatively cheap and highly potent compared to local brands, these spirits found a ready market among considerable numbers of Zimbabwean drinkers most of whom were wallowing in abject poverty. This chapter has explored the various reasons advanced by consumers of alcohol for preferring illicit imported spirits over local brands. While a significant number indicated that they took them because of their high potency which, among other things, drowned their sorrows, invigorated them, and enabled them to perform certain livelihood tasks without scruples, this chapter has asserted that the primacy of their popularity lay in their relative cheapness. This is largely because most of the drinkers could not settle for a brand of their choice, considering the socio-economic challenges they were experiencing.

This chapter contends that whatever benefits were obtained from taking highly potent imported illicit alcoholic spirits as some of the consumers claimed, they were absolutely artificial and short-lived. Instead, more sorrows were generated in an attempt to drown them. These frustrations degenerated into moral decadence epitomised by various forms of anti-social behaviour such as domestic violence and palpable social decadence. Such behaviour collapsed social tenets and doctrines. In addition to being a wasted and lost generation, most Zimbabwean youths also relinquished their adulthood as a result of their undignified and unproductive behaviour, as well as chronic health ailments, that emanated from their indulgence in illicit alcoholic spirits most of which were smuggled from Mozambique. Thus, the cheap illicit brands actually became costly to the decomposing Zimbabwean state in various ways which threatened the prospects of socio-economic recovery.

This chapter has, problematised the impact of consumer goods of foreign origin in general and illicit imported alcoholic spirits in particular on local societies and highlighted the ambiguities involved. It has demonstrated how the attempts to seek livelihoods by selling illicit foreign spirits by some marginalised Zimbabweans sacrificed those of other citizens and destabilised the general social fabric.

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Beyond the Genetically Modified Foods (GMFs) War: Reflections on the Effects of GMFs on Africa

Nkwaḻi Nkuḻi Mhango

“What a shame! Africa is now being fed by those she used to feed. She is fed genetically modified poisons as if she had nary fed her children” (Mhango 2015: 54).

Introduction

Organically, Africa used to feed its people for millions of years before the introduction of colonialism in the late 18th century that the Western colonial powers carried out for their advantage and to the detriment of Africa. Since colonialism, Africa has always been cascading into pointless dependency almost in everything, including food stuffs, among others. Essentially, Africa’s dependency is a socially-constructed reality that should not hold water if we are to carefully revisit its history and the way the West misconstrued and misrepresented it to suit their dubious and heinous interests (Andrews and Okpanachi 2012). It does not make any sense for the continent that used to feed its people so as to become stronger to produce slaves whereas others failed to be fed. Just like any unjust way of looking at things, Africa’s dependency is like a mirage if not a hoax due to the fact that those who concocted it still emphasise that Africa must internalise, subscribe to and reinforce it for their peril. This is why the introduction of Genetically Manipulated Foods aka Genetically Modified Foods (GMFs) are now being introduced to Africa for the benefit of Western companies such as Aventis, Monsanto, Novartis, Zeneca and many others, all from the West. Ironically, instead of looking at this move as a counterproductive one, while those behind it are now regarded as the new messiahs for the emancipation of Africa while they actually are but colonial tools

aimed at holding Africa at ransom once again Africa needs to vigorously oppose it.

Again, if we open-mindedly face it, are they really messiahs or just devils hell-bent to make profits even if by endangering the health of Africans? Are they going to improve Africa's wellbeing or exacerbating it? Sadly, Africa is made to believe that its hunger problems are likely to be solved through the introduction of GMFs. Quite the opposite is true, mainly if we consider health dangers and other ramifications the GMFs pose for Africa shall they not be stopped. The dangers are way too many for Africa to survive them economically, politically, socially and health-wise. Therefore, this chapter and indeed the book project to which the present chapter is part, is a wakeup call for Africa to think out of the box and arrest its food problems before things get out of hand.

It is historically and scientifically evident that the East African plateaus are the cradle of agriculture (Neumann 2005: 28); and that this technology, later, spread all-over the world therefrom. Thereafter, other advanced methods of agriculture mainly irrigation were invented. Egypt is said to be the cradle of irrigation farming. The discovery of shaduf, the waterwheel with attached pot; in Egypt in 2000 BC (Yannoupoulos, *et al.*, 2015: 5034) is a case in point. Some historians put the date that Egyptians discovered irrigation farming way back to 3200BC (Kloos and David 2000: 17). Now, the million dollar question is: Why then has Africa lagged behind as far as farming is concerned? The answer is clear that after being colonised and its ways of live felled, Africa found itself in the quandary it is in at the moment. Apart from discovering farming and other farming technologies such as farming, animals keeping, and mechanised irrigation, history testifies to the truth that Africa used to feed itself so as to produce strong people who ended up being taken to the Americas, Europe and the Middle East as slaves.

Again, after Africa was occupied and thereby colonised, its clout was lost so as to become a basket case contrary to the breadbasket Africa used to be. This is why it is only Africa that recently became dependent on foreign food while ironically sits on fertile soils dotted with lakes, rivers and sound weather, among other things. After being robbed of its agricultural clout, Africa is now facing another danger,

the introduction of genetically engineered foods. Either out of blindness, corruption myopia and inability all revolving around Africa's failure to feed itself, Africa has evidenced its leaders allowing foreign capitalistic and hegemonic firms to introduce genetic engineering as a solution to Africa's hunger.

In tackling the issues revolving around the introduction of the Genetically Modified Foods (GMFs) in Africa and its ramifications, I kick-off this discourse from the quote above. Issues of the GMFs are dichotomous and hot for the continent that on the one hand is endowed with fertile soil, rivers, lakes, sound weather, and human resources and, on the other hand, chronically suffers from the bouts of hunger. However, is it fair to say the GMFs are modified if not endangered? I would like to use the term to mean either Genetically Manipulated Foods or Genetically Endangered Foods instead of Genetically Engineered or Modified Foods. When it comes to the GMFs, there are many questions that need to be asked in addressing this anomaly resulting from the coloniality of Africa which, in essence, is the root cause of its acute hunger and dependency. Among those questions are: Does Africa really need GM foods despite the looming dangers they pose? Are the GM foods a solution to Africa's hunger problems? Is it the only solution available for Africa? Are those behind GM foods geared by the spirit of brotherhood and sisterhood to help Africa or just to recolonise it even more for the future of their generations which is detrimental for Africa and its people? There are many more questions than answers. What is clear is the fact that GMFs are cancerous and dangerous for human health. Maynard, et al., (2006) concur noting that "we have cautionary examples from genetically modified organisms (p. 269) which those espousing the introduction of GM food tend to conceal or ignore given that they are not the very victims of the phenomenon. Apart from that, there is another problem regarding the GMFs. This is nothing but how they are produced. Essentially, the idea of genetic manipulations is the result of the desire to produce crops that can resist various dangers such as insects and sometimes weather. When it comes to the pesticides used in such farming, Sharpe (1999) and EEA (2005 cited in Carvalho 2006) doubt that "we know very little about the environmental behaviour of these chemicals and about

their effect upon human health” (p. 688). Further, environmental behaviours and risks aside, Domingo (2007 cited in Domingo and Bordanaba 2011: 735) notes that there are scant experimental investigation on the safety of the GMFs and sometimes, data on toxicological assessment of GMFs and plants are not reported. Why are such findings not reported; and what is hidden and why if GMFs even plants have no health issues for human health? Arguably, there must be lots of dangers and things that we do not know about the Genetic Manipulation Technologies (GMTs) and GMFs. Now well into its introduction, genetic technology is still a fable for Africa. Therefore, it appeals to ask Africa to wait instead of rushing into a trap it cannot retrieve itself from. In this discourse, the chapter proposes some measures to be taken to do away with the dependency on GMFs and GMTs.

In pondering on the questions asked herein above, we need to think out of the box by avoiding either being driven by fear of hunger or narrow interests some of our rulers seem to apply in tackling many problems that Africa has always faced. We need to look at the problems economically, politically, socially, environmentally, and morally. For, once a continent like Africa allows foreigners to feed its people, it will be badly affected in the five facets above. I therefore tackle the issues revolving around GM food based on these five facets namely economically, politically, socially, environmentally, and morally. In many African cultures, it is a shame for anybody to be fed by another person. Being fed by another person makes the person who is fed precariously insecure and vulnerable. Ironically, when it comes to producing food resulting from external investment, it is the same African labourers that are used to run the show. There can be an argument that many foreign firms that have invested in agriculture use advanced technology in farming. This is true. Again, these firms use African labourers and manpower to produce whatever they produce. Why can't African countries empower their own people to invest heavily in agriculture at individual and collective levels? These are some of the questions that the present chapter addresses.

The effects of GMFs to Africa

GMFs kill traditional ones in order to safely secure the market for their production. This means that Africa's dependency on GMFs will grow even bigger and bigger with time. Once Africa becomes heavily and perpetually dependent on GMFs, the companies so producing them will have more freedom to even tamper on the GMFs without any resistance. Further, once traditional foods are felled; there will be many social ramifications such as the surge of cancers and antibiotic resistance which will burden the host countries economically as well as socially thanks to heavily depend on GMFs. For example, when interrogating aquaculture or the farming of aquatic organism, Sapkota, *et al.*, (2008) maintain that:

The current aquaculture practices can lead to elevated levels of antibiotic residues, antibiotic-resistant bacteria, persistent organic pollutants, metals, parasites, and viruses in aquacultured finfish and shellfish. Specific populations at risk of exposure to these contaminants include individuals working in aquaculture facilities, populations living around these facilities, and consumers of aquacultured food products (p. 1215).

As Sapkota *et al.*, (Ibid.) note, negative effects from the introduction of engineered foods or organisms, they will not only be on the consumers but also the producers even those living around the facilities in which such organisms or foods are produced. This shows how deadly the introduction of GM foods in Africa can be. Arguably, apart from arrogance, greed and ignorance for the part of Africa, those espousing the introduction of GMFs blindly consider only the positive side of the project emphasising that it produces the much needed food. For short-time goals, yes GMFs may seem to be a real big deal. However, for the long term consequences resulting from cancerous diseases, antibiotic resistance and the felling of traditional foods, the introduction of GMFs receive a very big no. In fact, raising a red flag against Genetic Manipulation Technology (GMT) has valid reasons if we consider how such a move will negatively affect the population of Africa. The dangers and fears that

GM technology poses are obvious and valid due to the fact that it involves the alteration of nutritional quality foods, potential toxicity, allergenicity, and carcinogenicity (Uzogara 2000; and Magaña-Gómez and de la Barca 2009), among others. Consequences resulting from consuming GM foods which consumers in Africa are facing and indeed likely to face even more painfully shall the wave of genetic technology go on unabatedly. Mackenzie and Glover (2003 cited in Craig, et al., 2008) note that many countries, including developed countries, are reluctant in undertaking consultations as necessary measures in determining the levels of risk considered acceptable by the public, and consequently what measures are appropriate to achieve the desired level of protection (p. 871). Why are governments of firms responsible for the manufacturing of GMFs reluctant to come clean on them? It is obvious that there is something to hide. Mackenzie and Glover go on saying that there are many tactics of hoodwinking the public vis-à-vis the risk GMFs pose to human health. One of the tricks many companies espousing GMFs use is bombard the public with the barrage of information to end up failing to understand what they are getting into. This technique has worked for a long time in Africa. Many donor countries have always used this loophole to force African leaders into conditional and exploitative agreements due to the fact that many of them do not want to read between the lines. Again, why has the international community conspired with the multinational companies while “international human rights law says that ‘in no case may a people be deprived of its means of subsistence?’” (Tutu quoted in Gray, 2009). The answer is simple that the so-called international community has always conspired against Africa due to the fact that it is a colonial handmaid.

To conclusively understand why Africa does not need GMFs, this discourse will shed light on how GMFs are going to negatively affect Africa. First, based on the experience from the place where GMFs have already been consumed, we find that genetic technology is likely to do more harm than good to human health, economy and culture. Godfray *et al* (2010) notes that new technologies, sometimes, offer major promise; however, the risks they pose such the loss of trust on their potential benefits due to the fact that they are exaggerated in public debate (p. 816) may be undermined thanks to

corruption and ignorance in Africa. Many researchers, apart from being funded by the same companies producing GMFs, tend to be compromised so as to support what the companies want. Pray (2001) notes that they have put pressure on the governments of the Less Developed Countries (LDCs); and such pressure helps them to get away with murder vis-à-vis the dangers GMFs pose to human health wherever they are consumed (also see Spielman, Hartwich and von Grebmer 2007; Hardell, *et al.*, 2007; and Spielman, Hartwich and von Grebmer 2010). Who pays the piper calls the tune the say goes. Dona and Arvanitoyannis (2009) generally note that GMFs causes some common toxic effects such as hepatic, pancreatic, renal, or reproductive effects and may alter the hematological, biochemical, and immunologic parameters, among others. However, some proponents of GMFs mitigate the risk by calling the plethora of risks resulting from them unintended effects (Cellini, *et al.*, 2004 and Frewer, *et al.* 2004) which are logically vague and unscientific so to speak. Western consumers that have been exposed to GMFs are concerned about health risks these foods pose to human health. Hoban cited in Rusk, Rosen and Fox (2003) reports that consumer awareness of biotechnology ranged from 55 to 57% in France and the United Kingdom to 91% in Germany. Only 30% of German consumers were willing to buy GMFs whereas 57% viewed biotechnology as a health risk. In France and the United Kingdom, 60 and 63% were willing to buy GMFs with 38 and 39% viewed them as a health risk (p. 18). Again, when it comes to Africa, I doubt if there are any researches conducted to see how African consumers will respond. This is simply so just because the introduction of GMFs seems to be the business between the governments and foreign firms.

As long as the introduction of the GMFs is done corruptly, ignorantly and irresponsibly, Biotech companies may use the existing systemic laxity and leeway to tamper with other African plants and animals so as to deny it its natural inheritance. I cannot imagine what will happen to rural dwellers that heavily depend on traditional herbs for treatments once herbal plants are tampered with or being genetically manipulated. With such *carte blanche* resulting from corrupt, inept and myopic leadership, Africa will continue to suffer heavily and perpetually. I do not think that there are stringent policies

applied in consenting to GMFs. This is problematic due to the fact that the consumers are not involved in decision making with regards to the introduction of GMFs to Africa.

Economic effects

Due to their financial muscles, companies involved in the production of GMFs have already changed laws in some states in the United States (US). These companies are more powerful financially than African governments. Take for example Monsanto whose research budget dwarfs the budget of the US. Gilbert (2010) puts it at US\$1.2 billion compared to the US federal government's total spend on agricultural science of \$1.1 billion in 2007. Here, we are talking about financial research capabilities. If such companies can compromise researchers, they will not fail to compromise politicians in African countries who are renowned for their myopia and being utterly corrupt. If Africans are not standing in the way of this looming agro-colonialism and agro-imperialism by raising their voices through their unity, chances for the GM companies to get away with murder are high. For they have the monies to dish out in kickbacks and corrupt myopic leaders the monies are intended are plenty in Africa. According to the Litchblau (2008), in 2005, federal authorities found that a Monsanto consultant bribed an Indonesian official in order to get approval for their operations in the country as a result of which Monsanto was fined \$US1.5 million for bribery, (Walters 2006) which can act as warning for what is to come to Africa.

More importantly, the threat that biotech companies pose does not only end in financial capabilities but also go as far as altering the rules of the game. For example, Nestle (2016) notes that the state of Vermont has already done) and permit GMFs to be labelled as "natural" while they actually are artificial and poisonous. Opponents of GMFs are questioning issues to do with safety, and the rationale of the lack of full transparency in labelling and patenting the GMFs p. 1) which needs to be Africa's concern as well. By allowing companies to make the rules of the game, the governments are not only selling their people but also sacrificing them just because of greed and ignorance not to mention rampant mega corruption in the ranks.

Apart from altering the rules of the game, it understandably seems foreign companies have been allowed to destroy the economies of local communities due to the fact that their products are cheap; and they are produced massively. So, too, multinational companies enjoy financial backing from their home countries. This makes it easier for them to buyout local farmers who end up becoming poorer and poorer so as to opt out of food production. Further, some African countries have already introduced registrations and policies that empower and allow them to lease parcels of land (Mhango 2015). If countries with many landless people like Kenya still have the guts to lease its limited land, what will stop them to blindly introduce GMFs despite knowing the dangers they pose? Who knows that biotech companies will take advantage of such reckless and suicidal policies? Once local produced are pushed out of production, many African countries will face another problem apart from the dangers GMFs poses such as becoming poorer than they are now, mainly after losing their place in production not to mention the destruction of their traditional crops so as to perpetually depend on GMFs.

There is another stark truth that Africa needs to ponder on. Africa should brace for troubles resulting from the introduction of GMFs which will displace many smallholder farmers. This is obvious due to the fact that over 90% of African economies depend on agriculture not to mention the majority of Africans this sector employs and provides for. Cooper, et al., (2008) maintain that Africa depend on rain-fed agriculture, which currently provides nearly 90% of staple food production in sub-Saharan Africa (p. 1). Apart from starving and making them dependent on GMFs, where will African governments send such farmers after GMFs uproot them from their land by producing massively and thereby sell cheaper resulting to their economic demise?

Political ramifications

After the effects of GMFs start bating, many governments will face resistance from the victims. Two things will happen here. Many diseases will claim many lives so as to cause dissent and worries among Africa's population. If Genetically Modified Organism

(GMOs) proved to have no benefits for Europeans, how will they have benefits to Africans? Unfortunately, the proponents of the introduction of GMOs to Africa do not show how safer and reliable they are. The information the general public has on the GMOs is so scanty that it is in the dark. Despite this lack of information on the GMOs and GMFs, Africa does not have any system in place to regulate such sensitive matters that have to do with GMFs, GMOs and GMTs. Again, why are some African leaders compliant in introducing GMTs? Makanya (2005) answers the question saying that many African elites are European-educated. So, they are more of stooges who cannot question their makers and masters. Otherwise, if they were not indoctrinated, they would be the first to oppose the introduction of the GMTs to Africa. They would be competent enough to understand and uphold their history of inventing farming. The dangers resulting from the consumption of GMFs do not require someone to be a rocket scientist to understand; and thereby take right measures to stop them. Essentially, Africa has always become a guinea pig for European sciences apart from being used to make money even at the peril of Africans. One wonders how some African leaders still trust those who colonised, exploited and enslaved their people. What makes the matters worse is the fact that even the World Trade Organisation (WTO), according to <http://www.bite-back.org/> seems to have blessed this bio-hazard as the friends of the World among who is Nobel laureate, Desmond Tutu, retired Anglican archbishop of Cape Town, South Africa, refer to GMOs. The FAO and WHO also seem to be in the same picture. For the FAO/WHO (2001 cited in Miraglia, et al., 2004), Codex Committee on Food Labelling is currently developing guidelines for labelling of GM foods (p. 1160). Due to the dangers and sensibilities of GMOs, the two organisations seek to trace the GMOs (FAO/ WHO 2003b cited in Miraglia (Ibid).

Given that multinational companies that are behind the introduction of GMFs to Africa have the backing of their home countries, they are likely to influence African politics so as to decide about who leads and who is overthrown. Mhango (2015) cites examples of the toppling of former Guatemalan president, Jacobo Albenz whom the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) topple to

protect the interests of an American private company, the United Fruit Company (UFCO) after he tried to buy back the land it acquired and sat on without developing (p. 373). The problems started when Albenz wanted to offer the valued the company declared in tax to end up finding that the company used to undervalue its land so as to pay low tax. When Albenz kept on his agenda of buying back the land, he was deposed. Mhango goes further giving more examples involving leaders who were either toppled or killed just because they stood in the way of Western multinational business to include Kwame Nkrumah (Ghana), Patrice Lumumba (DRC), Salvador Allende (Chile), and Thomas Sankara (Burkina Faso), among others. When it comes to Africa, it is sad that it has refused to learn from its own experience and history altogether.

Health ramifications

The proponents of GMOs have ignored important aspects of the problem by citing some successful stories such as the increase of production. For example, they cite the introduction of GM cotton in South Africa as an example. Whether this is a notable success that can act as replica for Africa is subject to dialogue depending on how one looks at it.

Nobody can eat cotton; and its products may have less health problems to human health compared to food products. Paarlberg (2010) disputes the above findings in South Africa disclosing that Europe “decided to stifle” because of the absence of direct benefits to Europeans (p. 609).

Secondly, many governments will fail to address health problems that GMFs will cause topping up to the already delicate health problems that Africa has faced for many years after abandoning its ways of life because of colonialism. However, Brookes and Barfoot (2006) and Bennett, *et al.* (2004) claim that the introduction of GMTs will increase production.

What should Africa do to become self-sufficient in food security and food production?

First of all, African governments, Africans and all those who support them should resist the introduction of GMFs to Africa. Although the multinational companies are pitching on profits from

this “newly-found paradise”, in the end their paradise will be short-lived due to the ramifications their business poses to the majority of Africans.

Secondly, for Africa to do away with food deficiency and food dependency, it must invest aggressively and massively in training agronomists who should serve the continent. To do so, Africa needs able and stable governments to manage the economy and production. Godfray, *et al.*, (2010) maintain that:

Where a functioning state exists, there is a balance to be struck between investing in overall economic growth as a spur to agriculture and focusing on investing in agriculture as a spur to economic growth, though the two are obviously linked in regions, such as sub-Saharan Africa (p. 813).

Third, Africa must invest in acquiring machinery for food production. African governments must support farmers and firms that are interested in food production based on natural foods. Large schemes of irrigation farming, improved home-produced manures and pesticides must be the target for governments that aspire to liberate themselves from food dependency and food insecurity.

Fourth, Africa should overhaul its education system so that it can chime with its needs. Colonial educational system encouraged the production of social scientists in many African universities. This needs to change. Many institutions for agro-sciences must be established to see to it that Africa produces enough experts that will help it to get out of food dependency. Students aspiring to study agriculture and agro-sciences must be motivated by their governments even if it means to sponsor them to study free provided that after the completion of their studies are not fleeing Africa to seek green pastures abroad as it has been for many years in many fields after such experts were ignored, persecuted or underpaid.

Further, Africa needs to abandon its colonial mentality of producing for export under what is famously known as cash-crop-based economy. If the efforts and capital spent on cash-crop production would be applied and directed to food production for home consumption, they suffice to solve Africa food problems. This is not a new thing. Africa was able to feed its people for millions of years before the introduction of colonialism simply because its

economy was based and directed to producing for its consumption first. But when colonial economy was introduced, the emphasis shifted to supplying foreign markets so as to forget Africa's needs. Therefore, instead of putting much premium and emphasis on cash crops, Africa needs to do so in food production (Mhango 2015) in order to be able to feed its people. Mhango's argument is simple that almost all cash crops that Africa produced cannot be eaten due to being inedible. He cites examples of cloves, cotton, flowers, pyrethrum, rubber, and sisal inter alia as crops that cannot be consumed locally leave alone their dependence on foreign market that dictate the prices for them. To keep on heavily investing in agriculture for Africa is not a new phenomenon in the recent times. For example, former Malawian President wa Mutharika is commended for having tried to resolve the problem of hunger in his country without necessarily depending on foreign firms or investing in genetic manipulation. Malawi is a poor and tiny country. wa Mutharika made this move after he was at loggerheads with the International Financial Institutions (IFIs). After being shunned, he turned to his people. This shows how African leaders can stop depending on foreign policies mainly in production of food for their people. But, thanks to good insights, it was, at one time, able to feed its population without necessarily to begging and whining or waiting for donors to come and feed it as it has always been the case for many African countries. In African culture, it is only babies and disabled people that are fed. Even cats and dogs are not fed. They fend for themselves.

More so, Sachs (2012) maintains that Mutharika had championed an agriculture-led boom in Malawi, one that pointed a way for Africa to overcome its chronic hunger, food insecurity, and periodic extreme famines. Evidently, this can act as point of reference for African countries that still languish in colonial mentality believing Africa cannot solve its own problem. When faced with hunger soon after the 1964 revolution, the then president of Zanzibar, Abeid Amani Karume abolished any importation of food stuff to Zanzibar. Like Mutharika, Karume wanted to usher in industrial revolution in order to deconstruct colonial economy in Zanzibar. Askew (2006) notes that so much of the arable land of Zanzibar was devoted to

clove the production of cloves forcing Zanzibar to import food supplies had. Additionally, despite the large foreign reserves, Karume refused to import basic food items such as rice and sugar; and insisted that Zanzibaris become 'self-reliant' and eat only what they could grow (p. 26). This shows how Africa has precedents that can help it to solve its hunger problems shall there be political vision and will. Karume did not fear anything even if it meant to lose power. He openly and truthfully told his people that they must produce for themselves due to the fact that donors, apart from taking advantage of them, they would not always be there to feed them. Why Karume was able to do something that has failed many African leaders over five decade after his death? The answer relies on his making. Karume was not Western trained or a product of Western institutions. This is why when compared to Western trained stooges such as Dr Hastings Kamuzu Banda (Malawi), Jomo Kenyatta (Kenya) and Felix Houphouet-Boigny (Ivory Coast) among others; he dwarfs them as far as emancipation of Africa is concerned. Therefore, he was not a stooge of anybody. The example of Karume and Mutharika reveals what lacks is political will. If Africa could get leaders of Karume's calibre, the right thing to do for it is completely stopping to import food supplies so that it can go back where it used to be before being colonised. By stopping importing foods, Africans have what it takes to figure it out and solve their problems as they used to do before. Essentially, there has been the lack of substantial investment in agriculture in Africa that has led to starvation (Jama and Pizzaro 2008: 218) which means that shall it be reversed, Africa has what it takes to feed itself; and thereby avoid becoming a dumping ground for toxic waste for GMFs.

Suffices it to say, Africa does not need GMFs. As noted here in above, GMFs will do more harm than good as far as Africa is concerned. So, too, their negative effects and impacts will be grave and perpetual shall Africa give in. Essentially, apart from being agro-colonialism, the introduction of GMFs must be treated as Africa's big and common enemy that begs for African countries to cooperate in taking on it.

Conclusion

In conclusion, it is obvious that Africa stands to lose shall it not resist the GMOs, GMFs and GMTs in general as long as they all aim at making money at the peril of Africans. As indicated herein above, Africa needs to go back to researching its history to discover how it was able to feed its people without necessarily depending on any aid before the inception of colonialism. There are still institutions in local communities that can help Africa's researcher to trace this missing link in Africa's development programs. This is especially true due to the fact that despite being forgotten in many African countries, small farmers have existed since time immemorial without depending on aid that ends up being misappropriated by local political elites.

Importantly, as long as the majority of Africans live in rural areas are the ones that are going to be heavily affected shall the GMOs be introduced, civil society and other stakeholders, activists and environmentalists, inter alia, need to mobilise them to stand against the introduction of the GMOs to Africa. For, they will lose their traditional seeds not to mention livelihood due to the above mentioned economic, health, political and social ramifications resulting from the introduction of the GMOs.

Acronyms and Abbreviations

EEA–European Environmental Agency

GMF–Genetically Modified Food

GMF–Genetically Manipulated Food

GEF–Genetically Engineered Food

GEF–Genetically Endangered Food

GMT–Genetically Manipulation Technology

IFI–International Financial Institution

LDC–Less Developed Countries

UFCO–United Fruit Company

CIA–Central Intelligence Agency

DRC–Democratic Republic of Congo

US–United States

WTO–World Trade Organisation

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Food, Health and Science in Africa: Locating GMOs Debates in the Shifting Global Epistemological Terrains

Artwell Nhemachena

In Asia, South Korea cancelled US wheat imports after Japan did. Thailand alerted its ports and China and the Philippines said they were following the US Department of Agriculture's investigation into the GM contamination (Huntado, 28 April 2014).

...it has clearly been shown that GMOs may be pests, invasive alien species, having toxicity qualities, indirectly are disease causing organisms and have food safety concerns. These would all fit into FAO's scope of concern for biosecurity (Majid 2012: 331).

...some poor African countries have vehemently rejected GMO technologies as an instrument of neo-colonial exploitation and subordination fostered by Western multinational corporations and their governments. Zimbabwe's President Robert Mugabe refused to accept food aid from the United States in the form of GMO corn despite threats of starvation for many (Stewart 2009: 11).

Introduction

Although food is often regarded as mere food, it often comes with political, social, cultural, economic and epistemic baggage that frame what we eat, when we eat, where we eat, how we eat, and so on. In other words, in matters of food, there are epistemological and ontological questions that should constitute part of the discourses on the contemporary epistemic and ontological turns. While traditional Marxist scholarship on education, would classify education and epistemologies associated with it as part of states' ideological apparatuses, it is imperative to note that education and associated epistemologies have increasingly come to be controlled by the global transnational corporations that fund global institutions be they media, education, politics, economics, cultural and religious. Thus,

there is need to situate matters of food, including genetically modified food, within the emergent broader global discourses about science and technology studies, including biotechnology. In this sense, the epistemologies that we interrogate are not necessarily individual African states' ideologies but the global, meaning more specifically Western, ideologies about transnational corporations' emergent biotechnology or genetically modified organisms (GMOs) or genetically modified food (GMF) industries. Therefore, it is less about Marxist ideological state apparatuses than it is about what I will call global [Western] ideological apparatuses that often are served by and serve the ends of global [Western] transnational corporations, even if to the detriment of Africans and their states. Viewed from a Gramscian (1971) point of view, it has never been the African states that predominated in the businesses of manufacturing consent to rule; rather it is the global or imperial] that, via ideologies in international media, education institutions and other fora, manufactures consent from Africans, including deciding what goes into the stomachs of the global or imperial subjects. Thus, while it is often believed that democracy is best demonstrated in electoral politics in Africa, here I argue that democracy is best demonstrated by the freedom of people to choose, produce and eat what they want- it is best demonstrated by the freedom of choices by people to decide what gets into their stomachs. The point here is best captured in a question on the utility of [mere] electoral politics in contexts where people cannot decide what gets into their stomachs.

Since the colonial dispossession and impoverishment of Africans, the Africans have witnessed diminished freedoms to decide what, if at all anything, goes into their stomachs. So, to be dispossessed of one's means of production and to be consequently impoverished as was done to Africans is tantamount to being deprived of [or to have attenuated] freedom to consume. Consequently, it is argued in this chapter that there cannot be conceivable freedom to consume without attendant freedom to produce; yet the burgeoning global business of "humanitarianism" has fostered, among African beneficiaries, illusions of freedoms to consume without attendant freedoms to produce, and *a fortiori* to own means of production. Contrary to arguments that would assume that

there are experts to whom the production and safety of food can best be delegated, this chapter argues that consumption without producing renders powerlessness to Africans that are reduced to consumers or beneficiaries, including of some toxic waste that is often presented as food.

The chapter argues that the contemporary ideologies about sharing economies, solidarity economies and resurgence of discourses of social protection (Satgar, 2014; Widlok, 2017), all effectively serve to manufacture global consent. They are intended to manufacture global consent to govern Africa such that global transnational corporations can continue to govern the global south that is being increasingly turned more into consumers than competing producers. If colonisation was about dispossessing and turning peoples of the global south more into consumers of colonial products, in the contemporary postcolonial era, we would expect more and more Africans to become producers rather than be turned into consumers still lacking ownership and control over the means of production. While there was some sharing in precolonial Africa, it is imperative to note that the capacity to produce was emphasised and so for the Shona people in Zimbabwe, the unproductive [who often always expected to be given hand-outs] were derided as *simbe* (lazy ones) while the hard workers were praised as *maita basa* (you have done good, productive work). Thus, turning Africans more into consumers and less into producers is antithetical to cultural precepts, including the African cultural training of children into hard workers. The experiences of colonisation across the African continent indicated that colonists find it easier to govern unproductive people who nonetheless have gargantuan appetites for consumerist exoticism. As Mamdani (2010) aptly argues, the Western “humanitarianism” is meant to turn the global south into wards; as recipients of Western aid including beneficiaries of the Western ‘Responsibility to Protect’ (R2P) African beneficiaries cease to be full human beings with full citizen rights to participate in matters that affect them—they become wards for westerners.

The on-going questions [explicated below] about the (un-)safety of genetically modified food/organisms that are produced and distributed by Western transnational corporations underscore

concerns about the underlying powerlessness of Africans who have been reduced to consumers since the colonial dispossession and impoverishment. Thus, when Africans complain that GMOs are unsafe, the breadth of their complaints, which is that to be rendered a powerless consumer is unsafe and unhealthy, is seldom understood. While scientific reports have indicated that GMOs cause infertility, impotence, cancer and other diseases, particularly for impoverished people in Africa who are prone to buy the cheap GMOs (Mawere and Nhemachena, 2017), it is important to note that matters of health need not be limited to individual bodies since in Africa health is also defined in terms of social, community and spiritual harmony. In this sense, confining tests for the safety of GMOs to scientific laboratories in which rats and other rodents are used is woefully inadequate and inappropriate to certify the safety of food for human [African] beings. Human beings, unlike animals and rodents have got histories, including histories of colonial unhealthy dispossession and disempowerment as producers, which are being exacerbated by GMOs and by transnational corporations that are force-feeding the impoverished with the GMOs.

In Africa, the absence of safety of food begins with the presence of dispossession of land and of other means of production. The argument here is that food is not necessarily safe because it has been tested in the scientific laboratories; the safety of food is tested in the real-life situations in the contexts of African societies. Colonial and apartheid Africa has taught Africans that food is unsafe because it has been tested in colonial and [global] apartheid laboratories where some human beings are considered as indistinct from animals and more generally from nature. In other words, while postmodernist scholarship would be contented with claims that there is no reality and no truth, even no society, and claim therefore that [African] human beings are interchangeable with the rats and rodents that are used in the experiments and in tests for food safety, it is necessary to note that considering human Africans as interchangeable with rats, rodents and animals has for long been part of the colonial and enslavement ideologies that often masqueraded as science (Nhemachena, 2016).

Carrying out scientific experiments on rats, rodents and animals on the assumption that human beings are like the rodents and animals is not only erroneous but it is an unhealthy reminder to Africans that since the era of enslavement and colonisation, they have been considered and treated as indistinct from rodents and animals. The point here is that it is inadequate for owners of the transnational corporations to produce GMOs, test them on animals and then force-feed Africans with the GMOs while paradoxically the same producers of the GMOs shy away from eating or consuming what they produce and distribute to Africans. As noted by Mawere and Nhemachena (2017) GMOs are distributed in the guise of humanitarianism to Africans who are forced to consume them yet paradoxically the same GMOs are shunned by citizens of the countries from which they originate. This behaviour by the transnational corporations and the countries from which the GMOs originate is contrary to African [Shona] forms of testing and distributing food. Among the Shona, there is the phrase, “*Kubvisa buroyi*” (to remove witchcraft) in which the person who distributes food to others has to first of all test the food by eating it him/herself and in the process assure the watchful beneficiaries that the food is safe.

The upshot of the above is that in an African cultural context food is not tested by giving it to animals or by pretending to be humanitarian to other human beings, but the producer and distributor has to test it by eating it while the beneficiaries watch or observe. In traditional African context food was distributed to African youths and children by their elders who would first of all test the food by eating portions of it. This explains why Africans are uneasy with transnational corporations that distribute food to Africans without first of all testing or even consuming it themselves in the presence of their supposed beneficiaries. Western epistemologies mistook these African practices as the greed of African elders yet these [good] African practices where elders were the first to eat served to assured the youths and children of the safety of food. The practices have vanished and they have been replaced by genetically modified food that is distributed by invisible transnational corporations with little if any assurances of contextualised safety.

Cheapened, the GMF is primarily targeted at the impoverished Africans who cannot grow or buy organic food of their own and are thus forced to eat, cheap but unsafe GMOs, invariably with stiff faces.

Although through discourses of science and associated presumptions of objectivity and rationality, colonial settlers attempted to erase African epistemologies that included matters of witchcraft, colonial regimes employed logics of witchcraft when they laced clothes, blankets and food [such as bread which they distributed to Africans and to aborigines in Canada and Australia] with poisons such that these people were nearly extinguished (Nhemachena, 2016). In the light of the resilient global coloniality (Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2013), matters of food safety for Africans inexorably conjure up colonial experiences such that when Africans and people of the global south complain that the food that is being produced and distributed by Western transnational corporations is unsafe, they need not be understood narrowly. The safety of food depends not narrowly on the certifications from scientific laboratories; rather it depends on the (un-)safety of a form of [corporate and colonial] science that has historically been used to perpetrate genocide on the enslaved and colonised peoples of the global south. In this sense, what is needed to assure Africans about the safety of food being distributed by transnational corporations and their associate “humanitarian” organisations is to destroy global apartheid; it is necessary not merely to foreground the need for African resilience to global coloniality and apartheid.

Although there is need to be sceptical including about science, this chapter argues that it is also necessary to be sceptical about postmodernist scholars that call for the deconstruction of science particularly in so far as this relates to matters of food and science. To argue that colonial science has been used to perpetrate genocide on Africans and aboriginal people across the world is not necessarily to condemn science but to cast aspersions on those that use science for nefarious projects including of genocide, extermination and to effect the envisaged New World Order depopulation agenda. When the Shona people say “*Totenda dzadzoka dzaswera nebenzi* (one must not place faith in people that have failed in the past); *totenda dzanwa*

dzaswera nebenzi (One must not place faith in one who has failed in the past); *totenda yavira shambakonzi yedembe* (we can only be assured when things materialise as promised)” they are signifying scepticism principally about the people who are in charge of things and processes and not narrowly about the things and processes themselves. Thus, the safety of genetically modified food cannot be divorced from the trustworthiness, honesty, and associated safety of those entrusted with the production and distribution of the food. There is parochialism in contemporary Western epistemologies that would want us to question [food] science without questioning the credibility and agendas of the owners and controllers of the Western transnational corporations that produce, [supposedly] test and distribute the food. In this sense, it is imperative to understand that the safety of both the food and the safety of the science that is used to test the food depend on the people who own and control the [corporate] science that is used to produce the food. If the [contemporary] world is as it is sick with global apartheid, the fundamental question is how safe is the [GMO] food that is produced in such a sickly world?

The contemporary postmodernist and poststructuralist purport to deconstruct science in the guise of decolonality is directed at the wrong target. The problem is not necessarily science but the people who use [food] science to perpetrate genocide and the extermination of others. Apart from erroneously presupposing that the only science that exists, and has ever existed, is colonial western science, postmodernism and poststructuralism neglect the existence of Africans [precolonial] science that was employed in the production of many different objects including textiles, guns, food, axes, beer, hoes and so on (Schmidt, 1992; Ellert, 1984; Nhemachena, 2017). Though postmodernist’s critiques of science purport to offer epistemic ‘charity’ to the people of the global south who are deemed to be oppressed by science (Nanda, 2003), the postmodernist deconstruction of science is in fact a legitimization of global transnational corporations’ oppression of Africans and people of the global south. Deconstruction and condemnation of science including scientific evidence makes it difficult for Africans to show or prove the toxicity of GMOs that global transnational corporations are

churning out for the impoverished to consume. In other words, while poststructuralists and postmodernists would want the world to believe that deconstructing science and scientific evidence is liberating or emancipatory, there is need to recognise the benefits of science and evidence deriving from it with respect to effects of GMOs on the health of Africans. Similarly, while postmodernists and poststructuralists would argue for dedifferentiation between for instance GMOs and organic food, this chapter argues that it is necessary to differentiate between the organic food and genetically modified food, especially in the light of the evidence about the dangerous effects of the GMOs. It argues that, in any case, when the transnational corporations claim patents over GMOs, they are in essence distinguishing them from organic natural foods (Shiva, 2003). So, even as they paradoxically encourage the impoverished people of the global south not to draw binaries or distinctions between the GMOs and organic food, the transnational corporations distinguish between organic and genetically modified organisms for purposes of claiming patents. The chapter therefore argues that contemporary epistemological shifts are intended to legitimise the consumption of [toxic] GMOs by the impoverished and dispossessed Africans who cannot afford organic food; thus the epistemological shifts, including calls for erosion of distinctions, in fact legitimise profiteering by transnational corporations which are producing and selling GMOs despite their hazardous effects on the impoverished and dispossessed. In this sense, the erosion of distinctions or effacement of binaries does not bring emancipation or liberation but it amplifies the exploitation of the impoverished who are deceptively made to believe that deconstructing binaries or distinctions frees them from the supposed curse of Cartesian binaries; in fact it mortgages them to the consumption of GMOs in the false belief that binaries between organic and GMOs have ceased to exist.

Understood in terms of the discovery of and consequent wanton manipulation of genetic codes of organism (Dizon *et al* 2015; Latham 2015) and the Western exigencies of playing God, the West has since about the 1970s, been increasingly critiquing rational and objective science. Couched in terms of critiques and assertions that rational and objectivist science legitimises hegemony, domination and

colonisation, the contemporary Western discourses can be understood as modalities to manufacture the [unwary] consent of Africans and other people of the global south to new Western forms of epistemologies and practices of producing and distributing GMOs. The epistemological shifts are meant to relieve the GMOs from having to undergo the [traditional] rigors of rational, objectivist scientific testing for safety. Absence of rational and objectivist science legitimises domination, hegemony and colonisation particularly by GMO producing transnational corporations that are anxious to evade objective and rational scientific evidence about the toxicity of the GMOs that they are manufacturing and selling or donating around the world. Writing about what they call “humanitarian fundamentalism”, Mawere and Nhemachena (2017) have noted ways in which people of the global south are often forced by “global humanitarian” organisations with toxic GMOs that are often rejected in the countries of origin. Pursuant to postmodernist and poststructuralist theories, Mawere and Nhemachena (ibid) note that it was pointed out by the “global humanitarian” organisations [force-feeding Africans] that it is not necessary to distinguish or differentiate between GMOs and organic food. Yet, recently, some villagers in drought stricken Zimbabwe rejected “humanitarian” organisations’ donations on the basis that the food being donated was fit for and meant for animals rather than human beings (Nhemachena, 2017). The worries by the villagers can also be understood in terms of postmodernist and poststructuralist postulations about the need to dedifferentiate humans from animals; postmodernist also posit the need to efface binaries between humans and animals. These reactions by the villagers to failures to distinguish between human food and animal feeds underscore the fact that postmodernism and poststructuralism are irrelevant theories that do not explain African realities including distinctions between human beings and animals. Thus, while postmodernists and poststructuralists celebrate dedifferentiation and effacement of binaries, the villagers were worried about the fact that donors would give them food that was fit for and meant for animals.

So, while the contemporary dominant theoretical moment is argued to be one of postmodernism and poststructuralism, there are

challenges in these theoretical frameworks in so far as they interface with Africa and the global south more generally. These postmodernist theoretical frameworks have often been understood to advocate for epistemological anarchism (Ong'aria, 2017), including crusades against objectivist, rational and evidence-based science. It is necessary to note that objectivist and evidence based science is important particularly in matters of food where people want to know clearly about what they are eating. Besides, people want to know objectively that what they are eating is not only food but safe and healthy food. In this sense, dismissing objectivist and evidence based [food] science creates risks that people will be fed with what appears to be food but which may in fact be poisons. The postmodernist dismissal of reality and truth is also meant to legitimise the consumption of unreal foods; it is meant to provide, for global transnational corporations, escape routes so as to deny the real and true [dangerous] effects [on the impoverished and dispossessed] of consuming GMOs. In fact the postmodernist era has been characterised by some scholars as an era or epoch of playfulness coupled with hedonism (Hamouda *et al*, 2013). Therefore the postmodernist and poststructuralist tenet that humanity has entered into a world of appearances is a playfully dangerous tenet for Africa and the global south in the sense that if humanity gets satisfied with appearances, they can easily be fed with poisons that appear as food. As hinted above, the increasing discourses about animism and animalisation of Africans including the exhortations to collapse human beings [on the same plane] together with animals also constitute dangers for Africans and peoples of the global south particularly where these discourses serve as foundations for feeding human beings with animal feeds. In the light of the cancerous [and monstrous] growths that are being caused by the consumption of GMOs [as well as by the effects of the associated herbicides] it can be argued that discourses about animism and animalisation in fact constitute Eurocentric scholarly celebrations of the monstrosities occasioned, on the impoverished and dispossessed in African and the global south, by the consumption of GMOs.

The [cancerous] monstrosities, including birth and hormonal defects, that are increasingly being occasioned on the impoverished

and dispossessed Africans, and peoples of the global south, replicate colonial denigration and caricaturing of Africans as beasts, animals, savages, barbarian and so on (Magubane, 2007; Nhemachena, 2017). While colonists misrepresented Africans as animal, beasts, barbarians, savages with eyes on their chests, postmodernists presume that the contemporary era is no longer one of representation but of nonrepresentational performativity and action. Unfortunately, the nonrepresentational performativity or action include producing and distributing GMOs to the impoverished and dispossessed Africans even if the consumers consequently develop queer monstrosities that are then celebrated as hybridity by postmodernists and poststructuralists. In this nonrepresentational, antihuman and posthuman epoch, uncritical enrolled African intellectuals have joined in celebrating their “bestly queerness” and “hybridity” even if these militate against their humanity and human identities. While sincere African scholars would have expected abatement of the colonial caricaturing of Africans as queer, animals, oddities, beastly and so on, sadly Africans continue to be represented as and turned into physically, intellectually and sexually queer oddities as reflected in queer theories that are being popularised in the continent’s academics.

Noting the monstrous [cancerous] growths caused by consumption of GMOs and the feeding of human [African] beings with animal feeds, the chapter argues that hybridisation, antihumanism and posthumanism are in fact extensions of postmodernist theories meant to transform human identities in the global south in such ways that they appear as much like animals as possible. In this vein, it is argued that although postmodernism and poststructuralism are often touted by some scholars as emancipatory and anti-political, they are in fact mechanism of resilient global coloniality meant to dehumanise and animalise [human] identities of citizens of the global south.

Understood in the context of colonial and enslavement history where Africans were considered and treated as indistinct animals, contemporary scholarship on antihumanism and posthumanism is not presenting anything new, and nothing is liberatory or decolonial in the works. Looked at in the historical colonial and enslavement

historical context where Africans were dehumanised and considered indistinct from nature, the biotechnological transnational corporations' performative turning of Africans into [cancerous] monsters is nothing new. Viewed in the light of contemporary discourses by some scholars [advocating the need to turn some human beings into animals] it becomes easier to comprehend the discourses that are effectively celebrating the monstrous cancerous growths [arising from consuming GMOs] that are turning Africans and people of the global south away from human appearances. Understood in the light of the contemporary new scramble for Africa, it becomes easier to see the import of the new animalisation of Africans. The animalisation of Africans is a precursor to denying them sovereignty over their environments and other resources (Nhemachena, 2017; Smith, 2011). Thus, in spite of contemporary pretences to freedom, liberation and decolonisation, global [food and culinary] coloniality not only abides but it has intensified particularly in a context where African [food] sovereignty is invariably denied by Western transnational corporations and their governments. To understand these continuities, it is necessary to dwell on the historical aspects of food insecurity and safety in relation to colonialism and the attendant dehumanisation and animalisation of Africans.

Food Safety and Security: The historical trajectory of the Western dehumanisation and animalisation of Africans

As hinted above, African concerns with food safety and food insecurities did not begin with the contemporary era that is hyped-up with discourses of climate change and threats to food security; rather African food insecurities are partly a result of resilient (neo-)colonisation and the resilient colonial accumulation by the dispossession of Africans. As noted by Illiffe (1990) some Africans in Zimbabwe did not accept colonial food aid, in the 1890s, during the famine that marked the colonisation of the country. In the recent years of the 21st century, some Zimbabweans continued to decline “humanitarian” food aid on the premise that it is not food for human beings but for animals in the countries of origin (Nhemachena, 2017). In the colonial era the colonists destroyed African granaries and grain

bins in order to force Africans to capitulate and to render them dependent on colonial food aid (Illiffe, 1990; Chigodora, 1997). Similarly, in the postcolonial era the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund have, through impositions of debilitating neoliberal economic reforms on Africa, destroyed African food production systems only to turn around and [together with their sibling Western institutions and organisations] force-feed Africans with [GMO] food aid (Shiva, 2002). During the colonial and apartheid eras, there were reports and subsequent admissions by colonists who laced, with poison, the food, blankets and clothes that were distributed to Africans (Nhemachena, 2016). Equally, in the contemporary era there are also reports of poisoning and deformities caused by the consumption of GMOs as well as exposure to GMO chemicals in the environment (Mawere and Nhemachena, 2017).

Similarly, just as there were deadly famines, including droughts, epidemics and locust outbreaks in various African countries, at the time of colonisation (Chigodora, 1997; Illiffe, 1990; Chitiyo, 2004), in the contemporary era discourses of climate change, diseases and famines are being popularised and foregrounded in a century marked by the new scramble for Africa. Thus, at moments when Africans were being colonised, dispossessed of their land, cattle, sheep, goats and other resources, there also appeared “natural” disasters to force them to capitulate to colonisation and ensuing food insecurities. Of course Africans wondered why it was mostly African cattle that were killed by the colonists in the supposed measures to control the rinderpest outbreaks (Mutowo, 2001; Schmidt, 1992). In the contemporary era, Africans wonder why it is the dispossessed and impoverished Africans that are supposed to accept the contentious GMOs as the supposed climate change adaptation modality, while the rich can grow and purchase more expensive organic foods (Mawere and Nhemachena, 2017). Equally, today Africans wonder why the colonists and their descendants who have dispossessed the Africans of their land, cattle, goats, and sheep and so on return to Africa to dictate what should go into the stomachs of their victims of dispossessions, impoverishment and exploitations. The colonial enclosures, privatisation and fencing-off of forests with wild fruits and wild animals induced food insecurity among Africans. The

colonial burning of African granaries forced the [food insecure] Africans to seek badly paid work in colonial factories, mines and land. In the contemporary era, the IMF and World Bank neoliberal reforms can be understood as coercing Africans into a New world Order [where those at the global helm worry more about population control than about restitution of colonial African dispossession] in which they are forced to eat GMO toxins. In other words, colonists thrived by creating hunger and threats of starvation for Africans whose [largely colonially induced] destitution constituted the colonial modality to enrol the Africans into the imperial project. In this vein, (neo-)colonists operated as what I would call ‘food guerrillas’ who destroyed African food systems in order to force Africans to succumb to colonial and imperial matrices of power. In view of this history, it is no wonder why Africa has remained locked in the imperial matrix of food aid in spite of the presence of fertile well-watered soils on the continent.

While early missionaries and travellers to Africa noted ways in which African kings and chiefs provided security, including food security partly from cultivation of communal lands (Illife, 1992), contemporary discourses erroneously paint Africans as incapable of providing their own security to fellow citizens. The fact that colonial settlers destroyed the African food security systems including what among the Shona people of Zimbabwe is known as *Zunde Ramambo* (granaries of the kingdom or community granaries) (Mararike, 2001; Mawere and Mubaya, 2015), is often ignored in the discourses that paint Africans as incapable cultivators and incapable providers of food security. Similarly, the fact that it was the colonial settlers who destroyed vibrant African agricultural systems that even outcompeted the settlers’ own (Palmer, 1977; Schmidt, 1992) is often ignored in contemporary discourses on food security and safety. As ways to pre-empt restitution and reclamation of African land, Africans are often deemed to lack the scientific knowledge for agricultural and manufacturing production, but these discourses ignore the ways in which colonists perpetrated epistemicide for centuries on African indigenous scientific knowledge. Equally, as ways to legitimise erroneous assumptions that Africans lack capacity for disaster preparedness, Africans are often deemed to lack temporal

notions of the future even though there is evidence that Africans considered their futures particularly when they established granaries, grain bins and *zunde ramambo* to store grain and other food varieties for future use. Such caricaturing of Africans and their institutions result in regressive afropessimism in matters of food production, including food sovereignty.

In the light of the above, the current discourses in Western media and academia about increasing food insecurity in Africa do not stand to critical scrutiny. If descendants of colonial settlers are, as is often claimed in efforts to ward off African land restitution, better able to utilise African land and other resources then there is a paradox. The paradox is that the same Western media and academia claim that Africa is chronically food insecure and unable to produce [organic] food from its own soil. The fact that the same Western media argue that there is increasing food insecurity in Africa is paradoxical in the sense that descendants of colonial settlers who currently retain ownership and control of African land resources are noted as better able to make use of African land. The question is why is food insecurity increasing in postcolonial Africa where those who are argued to be better [White] farmers still own and hold control over the land? It can be argued that the descendants of colonial settlers have science and technology to their side but this would ignore the existence of African science which colonial settlers appropriated and erased (Mhango, 2016; Harding, 1994). Similarly, touting Western science ignores the contemporary postmodern critiques of Western science as domination, as hegemonic and as a tool for colonisation. In other words, there is a paradox in the contemporary justification of colonial land ownership and regimes of control on the basis of possession of scientific knowledge as well as technology and on the other hand the Western postmodern critiques of the same Western science and technology.

The fact that postmodernism and poststructuralism arose in the 1960s/1970s at a time when people in the global south were busy decolonising is significant for analysing the attendant epistemological terrain in relation to food safety, security and sovereignty of Africans. Because postmodernism emphasised the notion of the decentred subject, it is aversive to the idea of sovereignty, including food

sovereignty. Similarly, because postmodernism emphasises the emergence and predominance of consumer society or consumer culture, postmodernism is aversive to food production, including food sovereignty by Africans. The emphasis on consumption rather than production, especially at a time when Africa is decolonising, means that postmodernism denies Africans not only production but productive resources or ownership and control of the means of production. Coming at a time of decolonial wars, such postmodernist assumptions of the emergence of a consumer rather than production society was meant to stall or reverse the decolonisation process including the restitution of means of production to Africans. In essence, the assumption of postmodernism from that time was that Africans would have to be satisfied as consumers rather than aspire to be producers with ownership and control of meaningful means of production. Similarly, the assumption of postmodernism was that Africans should be satisfied with dependency on the Westerners as controllers or owners of means of production. Thus, although some scholars consider postmodernism to engender equality, toleration of difference and so on, postmodernism can be understood to have emerged as an antithesis to on-going Marxist revolutions for restitution of means of [food] production to Africans, which began in the 1960s/1970s in Africa.

In terms of food and health, postmodernism's insistence on absence of dichotomies entails failure to differentiate between organic and GM food; it, by extension, entails failure to differentiate between what is food and what is toxic or poisonous. Equally, the postmodernist insistence on hyperreality or surreality underscores failure to distinguish between the real and the fabrication; between the natural and the artifice; between the organic and the GM food. In this sense, postmodernism serves to legitimise the GMO productions that we are witnessing now. Postmodernist insistence on multivocality of forms of consumption (Firat *et al* 1995) legitimises emergent alternative GM forms of consumption. Thus, Hamouda *et al* (2013) point out that the postmodern consumer seeks to live deeply in all identities which he built in order to live at best the various experiences of consumption. They also note that postmodernism calls for pluralism and acceptance of differences,

openness and tolerance, acceptance of disorder and chaos and importance of style and form. As a way to fractionate common cultural foundations of culinary habits, Hamouda *et al* (ibid) argue that postmodern consumers rejects myth of a universal and uniform reality to allow recreation of new particular realities by releasing the sign of what it means and of its referent. Intimating that, with postmodernism, food has become a mere sign, they point out that signs can be detached from their original referents and meanings can become floating. In this sense, [GMF] food can be understood to have become signs detached from their original referents; their meanings are rendered floating signifiers. In the context of this chapter, African individual consumers can be understood, in a postmodern dispensation, to be faced with incompatible and contradictory choices-the necessity to remain an original African consuming original African food and on the other hand the pressures to consume GMF that not only distorts originality but also threatens to undo the original African [as indeed human] identity. Further, if in postmodernism everything has become a sign, the question [and danger] is that even human beings have logically become mere [dispensable] signs without attachment to the original referents as human beings. By extension, the lesson from postmodernism is that the human being can as well be a sign of an animal or beast that can be fed with animal feeds rather than the original human foods.

Further, postmodernists argue that the postmodern consumer voluntarily and consciously assumes identities in order to immerse into consumption experiences in so far as each can organise and construct multiple individual identities. So, the lives of postmodern consumers are fragmented and they constitute paradoxical consumption moments; this arguably explains the paradoxes, in which impoverished human beings are fed, by transnational corporations and “humanitarian” organisations, with animal feeds in a postmodernist epoch. Postmodern discourse and culture are considered to take away the human subject’s privileged status such that there is rather recognition of the influence of objects to guide the desire of the individual consumer-a decentred subject (Baudrillard, 1981 cited in Hamouda *et al* 2013). However, it is not the influence of the GMF as objects that threaten to take away the

consumer's privileged status. It is the manufacturers of GMF that threaten to take away the privileged statuses of African consumers and African farmers. During the colonial era empire decentred African producers and consumers by subjecting them to imperial dispossession, expropriation and appropriation. In the contemporary era, postmodernism offers a theoretical moment for the resilient empire to continue to decentre African producers and consumers via biotechnology producing GMF. With the emergence of postmodern consumption where Africans are forced to eat genetically modified pastiches of food, the consumer-subjects lose control over their health and food safety. However, this aspect is similar to the colonial and apartheid era when settler regimes laced food [with poison] which they sold to and gave to Africans and other colonised peoples of the global south (Nhemachena, 2016). Becoming unhealthy is in effect a consequence of being decentred and losing control over what one consumes and becomes. While postmodernists argue that in postmodernity, there is reversal of production and the consumer is considered an actor and producer of meaning (Hamouda *et al*, 2013), what African farmers and citizens who are resisting GMF are effectively hankering for is not being mere actors and producers of meanings. They are anxious to produce commodities including organic culturally relevant and safe food. For postmodernists to confine African citizens and farmers to producers of meanings is to perpetuate colonial injustices: when colonists dispossessed and exploited Africans, Africans' concerns were not about the production of meanings as Africans sought to reclaim their material possessions. Thus, while postmodernists argue that consumption is not only a process of personal destruction, but also, a social act of symbolic meanings, social codes and relationships (Hamouda *et al*, 2013: 43); it is necessary to notice that Africans are keen to preoccupy themselves with production of goods and services rather than social meanings, social codes and relationships. Africans do not necessarily eat meanings, social codes or relationships as is presupposed in postmodernists foregrounding of these aspects; rather they eat materialities in the form of food, which safety they are concerned about. In this sense, the postmodernist preoccupations with production of meanings and existence of multiple meanings about

food in effect sidestep Africans' concerns about ownership and control of material means of production that make it possible to produce material [food] objects that speak to safety, security and sovereignty.

Force-Feeding Africans? Food Safety, Health and Insecurity

African concerns about the safety of GMF come in the wake of reports that some Western organisations and foundations are funding [under the guise of global health programs] infertility technologies, GMOs and vaccines to render human sperms, particularly of the poor and marginalised in the world, unviable (Natural News, 10 August 2012). Hitler's eugenics project was meant to perpetrate genocide, eliminate the weak, ugly, the stupid, disarm the target race to be eliminated and herd them to gas chambers or open pits. However, currently, there are covert ways that are being used including convincing people to eat genetically modified foods which promote infertility, to drink fluoride, take vaccines, use synthetic chemicals, engage in homosexuality, increase abortions and pursue other actions that kill or reduce rates of reproduction (Natural News, 10 August 2012). Though the United Nations is expected to protect the impoverished, marginalised and dispossessed, there are arguments that the UN and Transnational Corporations are in close collaborations which are institutionalised through the Global Compact-an alliance between the Secretariat of the UN and large corporations many of which have long histories of human rights violations and corruption (Teitelbaum, 2007; Nhemachena and Warikandwa, 2017). Besides, there are worries, by citizens of the global south, about global apartheid which still exists in a bifurcated world where the logics of the 'White master' are resilient (Dunaway *et al* 2016; Richmond 1994). This logic of global apartheid is manifesting through the Western appropriation of patents from African lives; experimentation with African lives including genetic editing and the turning of lives into commodities for Western corporations to make profits (Independent, 18 July 2010; Global Research, 8 October 2016; Nhemachena *et al*, 2016).

In the light of concerns by scientists including the 800 scientists who want patents on organisms, cell lines, and living things revoked and banned (Natural Society, 24 May 2013) it has been argued that patents are a form of playing God, they threaten food security and safety, they sanction bio-piracy of African indigenous knowledge and genetic resources, they violate human rights and dignity and they compromise healthcare. Although the 800 scientists presented a letter to the UN Commission on Sustainable Development; the UN Convention on Biodiversity; The World Trade Organisation and to the U. S Congress, they have not received attention. Other concerns raised include the fact that GMOs cause birth defects, miscarriages, depression, homosexuality, reversal of hormones, switching of gender, suicide, disorders of the central nervous system, neurological pathologies, cancers, male sterility and impotence, hormonal disruptions and death (The Guardian, 11 September 2015; Mawere and Nhemachena, 2017). The absence of effective responses to calls by scientists to ban GMOs has been interpreted in terms of the complicity of the UN in a conspiracy of secret society New World Order agenda to reduce the world population through GMO soft kill methods in which the poor in the world eat GMOs and die out. So, the UN's responses have been interpreted in terms of the UN Agenda 21 conspiracy to reduce world population from about 7.2 billion to 1 billion using soft and hard kill methods including war, manmade or induced disasters as well as naturally occurring disasters, geo-engineering weather modification and climate control. In engineered weather modification and climate change, high frequency electromagnetic beams and electromagnetic pulse (EMP) technology are used so as to legitimise the consumption of poisonous GMOs some of which cause the birth of babies with microcephaly or abnormally small heads (Global Research, 23 May 2015; Independent, 8 February 2016).

Climate change and the threats of famine were used in the early colonial period in various areas of the African continent, to ensure that Africans succumbed to colonisation (Mutowo, 2001; Chigodora, 1990; Chitiyo 2004; Feuerman, 1990). Similarly, it is argued by some scholars that the contemporary discourses about climate change are meant to serve the agenda of the transnational corporations that want

Africans and peoples of the global south to succumb to consuming genetically modified organisms which are currently being largely resisted. In this respect, Werner (1993: 138) notes that in colonial Namibia, a series of natural catastrophes, including droughts and rinder pest pandemic of 1897 wiped an approximate 90% of cattle. Noting contemporary plots by contemporary globalists pushing for the New World Order, One World Government, Watts (2013: 7-8) states thus: "In searching for a new enemy to unite us, we came up with the idea that pollution, the threat of global warming, water shortages, famine and the like would fit the bill...?" Similarly, Wacha (8 March 2013) notes the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) director as stating that: "... in future the technology [biotechnology] could be necessary to help modify crop varieties with the capacity to combat effects of climate change such as increasing temperatures on crop production".

In spite of the dangers that the global south is facing from the Western Transnational Corporations producing GMOs, the IUCN or The World Conservation Union (August 2007) has noted that in 2006, GM crops were grown commercially by 10.3 million farms (9.3 million resource poor farmers in developing countries in 22 countries). While some of the developing countries are noted to have put in place biosafety laws, the IUCN notes that many developing countries still lack both the resources and capacity to be able to monitor impacts of growing or trading in GM crops. It is further noted that since genes work in tandem with many other genes and are affected by multiple influences both within and beyond the cell, it is difficult to know with precision the function of a modified or transplanted gene, let alone the ecological consequences of its introduction into a plant or animal that is released into the environment. For this reason, the IUCN further argues that the widespread introduction of GM products is premature as it presents unpredictable risks to both human health and the natural environment. Further forcefully making the point that tests for safety are neither accurate nor conclusive, the IUCN gives the example of the impact of chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) on the ozone layer, the human health implications of asbestos and the bioaccumulation of certain pesticides in animals, as indications that there could be long-

term effects of GMOs that scientists do not sufficiently consider when developing their products. In each of these cases, it was only with continued scientific investigations that eventually led to strict restrictions on these products. Further noting possibilities of contamination by GMOs, the IUCN (2007: 9) argues that while GM transfers only short sequences of DNA relative to the entire genome of a plant or animal, the resulting phenotype, which includes the transgenic trait and possibly other accompanying changes, can produce an organism novel to the existing network of ecological relationship. Thus, there is need to be cautious about the long term safety of consuming food made from GMOs.

As far as indigenous Africans are concerned, the danger is that consuming GM food can produce changes in their own human genome such that the human constitutions are altered beyond correction. In this sense, eating GM food has implications and consequences not merely for human identity but for indigenous identities which are threatened with deformities in terms of changes in the genetic constitutions. Postmodernists argue for dedifferentiation and they argue that there is no inside and no outside, no local and no foreign. In this way, they can be understood to be rendering theoretical legitimacy to transnational corporations' efforts to alter the identities and constitutions of the indigenous so that when they are genetically edited and deformed they cease to claim indigeneity and the attendant heritages. In other words, genetically editing the food organism for Africans constitutes an indirect way of genetically editing the African indigenous consumers' own genetic constitutions in ways that are favourable to global transnational political-economies. In this sense, genetic modifications of organisms including human African beings serve to perpetuate the colonial aversions to African hierarchical genealogies that constitute the bases for claims of indigeneity and as foundations of the attendant struggles for restitution of resources. Thus, while some might argue that a postmodern era is one where indigenous knowledges are revalorised, postmodern manipulation of genetics does the opposite as it destroys indigenous foundational genealogies. In other words, tests for safety of GMOs need to stretch beyond

concerns with safety to the individual biological body to encompass safety to one's cultural indigenous identity.

Thus, there are critiques about the adequacy of testing food using animals and rodents, which in any case differ from human beings such that results from animal testing cannot be safely extrapolated to human beings (Barnett, 23 August 2015; Baumas, 2004; Dutt *et al*, 6 May 2013; Zurlo, 2012). However, some thinkers and scholars argue that GMOs are being dismissed when in fact they are safe (Novella, 2014). While animal experiments led to discoveries such as anaesthetics, the hormone adrenaline, helped to developed knowledge on replacement of valves, blood transfusions, antibiotics and asthma medicines (Baumas, 2014; The Guardian, 25 August 2005), results from animal experiments cannot always be extrapolated to human beings. In this regard, Zurlo, (2012) notes that results obtained from animal experiments lack precision such that toxicity tests of pharmaceuticals in rodents predict human toxicity only 43 per cent. Further, Dutt *et al* (6 May 2013) argue that:

New scientific research has cast grave doubts on the safety testing of hundreds of thousands of consumer products, food additives and industrial chemicals...They... invalidate the entire body of safety information that has been built to distinguish safe chemical from unsafe ones. The new results arise from basic medical research, which itself rests heavily on the idea that treatments can be developed in animals and transferred to humans...about 90% of all pharmaceuticals tested for safety in animals fail to reach the market, or are quickly pulled from the market.

Thus, while Novella (2014); and Key *et al* (2008) argue that biotechnology including GMOs can be used productively to engineer resistance to droughts, extreme temperatures or salinity and biotic stresses, and that the public fears of GMOs are largely based on false premises and misinformation, there are concerns about the capacities to test GMOs in Africa. In this vein, The African Centre for Biosafety's (1 August 2012) study highlights numerous risks posed by the herbicide glyphosate to human and animal health as well as worrying regulatory failures in South Africa. So, arguments that the

public's resistance to GMOs is misinformed (Novella, 2014) are hard to sustain in the light of concerns about the sufficiency, adequacy and capacities to test for safety.

Postmodern dismissals of traditional concerns with purity (Bullock *et al*, 2000) are worrying especially in the light of dangers of pollution or contamination from GMOs particularly transgenic recombinant DNA biotechnology involving shifting genes from distant entities (Novella, 2014). Read together with Livingston and Halberstam's (1995) argument that the celebrated postmodern body is a polluted and infected body, it is not difficult to understand why the Transnational biotechnology corporations like Monsanto, Dow and Syngenta are telling the public that there is nothing to worry about with respect to contamination, affliction and pollution through consumption of GMOs (Natural News, 19 January 2015). In postmodernism, anything goes so the motto for postmodernists can be understood as eat or consume anything because the distinctions between food and toxins have ceased to exist.

The biotechnology companies fund the researches [and of course, scholarly caucuses on (re-)theorising the world] such that when these studies are not funded by the biotech industry, the results show uncontrollable, uncontainable, and dangerous technology with serious health hazards (Natural News, 19 January 2015). While some studies conclude that GMOs enhance food security (Stewart 2009; Yang *et al*, 2015; BBC News, 11 June 2015; Natural Society, 22 March 2015), there is evidence that the GMOs do not enhance food security. It has been noted that South African farmers have more than 16 years of experience in cultivation of GM maize, soya and cotton, but the promise that GM enhance food security has not materialised as South African food security is in fact declining with almost half the nation currently categorised as food insecure (Natural Society, 22 March 2015). In the U.S.A, it is also noted that GM crop production is slowing yields and increasing pesticides (Global Research, 8 April 2014). Latham (31 August 2015) also notes that U.S.A farmers have seen seed cost nearly quadruple and seed choices greatly narrow since the introduction of GMOs. For this reason, it has been argued that global politics and corporate interests have played a role in distorting

an honest inquiry into the health effects of GMO crops (Krimsky, 2015).

Arguing for feeding the planet with organic GMO free methods, Global Research (8 April 2014) contends that humans that have been exposed to glyphosate and roundup have a drop in amino acids typtophan levels, they do not have the necessary active signalling of the neurotransmitter serotonin, which is associated with weight gain, depression and Alzheimer's disease. It also cites a study that shows that meal-derived DNA fragments carry complete genes that can enter into the human circulation system through unknown mechanisms. It is further noted by Global Research (8 April 2014) thus: "In one of the blood samples the relative concentration of plant DNA is higher than the human DNA". In this sense, it becomes easier to understand some contemporary scholars' promotion of discourses on becoming animal, becoming plant and so on (Nhemachena, 2017). The question is how can human African beings avoid being turned into animals and plants if they yield to pressures for genetic editing of their bodies and the food organisms that they eat? As noted above the danger is that human beings end up having greater concentrations of plant genes than their human genes.

Further, GMOs have been linked to cancer. A study by the Institute for Responsible Technology (IRT) which is cited by Global Research (8 April 2014) showed that GMO food is related to intestinal permeability, imbalanced gut bacteria; immune activation and allergic response; impaired digestion and damage to intestinal walls. Also, glyphosate is noted to induce human breast cancer, it is an endocrine disruptor or chemical that can interfere with hormone system in mammals and cause birth defects, malformations and cancer tumours, breast cancer. Roundup is noted to cause early puberty, cancer, thyroid issues, and infertility and so on. Although the World Health Organisation is noted by scholars like Vandana Shiva (2003) as having been mobilised to force African countries to accept GMO food, the Guardian (21 March 2015) notes that the WHO has said that glyphosate causes cancer and that The International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC)-WHO's cancer agency-said that glyphosate, the active ingredient in the herbicide made by agriculture company Monsanto, was 'classified as

carcinogenic to humans. While this is the case, other scholars like Norris (2015) have pointed out that American Medical Association and WHO have concluded that GMO foods are safe for consumers in spite of toxicity, dangers to health, mutations, and potential for transfer of genes to the consumer as reported by independent researches in the US which are done by some anti-GMO advocacy groups. De Vendomois *et al* (2010) also note the danger of complex recombination events which are caused by insertion of transgene leading to synthesis of new RNA products encoding unknown proteins or and metabolic pathway variations.

Further noted are health effects of pesticides including cancer and damage to nervous system, endocrine and reproductive system (Hsaio, 10 August 2015). It is noted by Hsaio (*ibid*) thus: “Studies have shown preliminary evidence that chronic low-dose exposure to GMO pesticides increases the risk of cognitive impairments and diseases such as Alzheimer’s and Parkinson’s later in life...glyphosate has been linked to cancer in rats and mice and experiments in human cells have shown that exposure to glyphosate can cause DNA damage”.

Although it is often argued that there is substantial equivalence between GMOs and the parent plants in the sense that the substances expected to become components of food as a result of genetic modification will be the same or substantially similar to substances commonly found in such food, (de Vendomois *et al*, 2010: 591), such a concept is subjected to debate in the scientific community because it is based on a simplistic view of living cells”. For Shiva (n.d), although there are claims of substantial equivalence, genetically modified food is different because it has genes from unrelated organisms. Exposing the hypocrisy of biotechnology companies, Shiva (*ibid*) notes that the biotechnology industry gives up the claims of substantial equivalence when it claims patents on GMOs on the ground of novelty. Shiva (n.d: 19) notes thus:

While governments and government agencies promoting genetic engineering refer to ‘sound science’ as the basis of their decisions, they are manipulating scientific data and research to promote the interests of the biotechnology industry while putting citizen health and the

environment at risk...Scientific agencies have split and polarised into two communities-a corporate science community and a public science community. The corporate science community participates in distorting and manipulating science....When industry wants to avoid risk assessment and issues of liability the argument used is that the genetically engineered organism is 'substantially equivalent' to the non-engineered parent. However when industry wants property rights, the same GMO becomes "novel" or substantially inequivalent to the parent organism.

Although producers and distributors of GMF would want the beneficiaries to believe that there is substantial equivalence between GMF and organic food, the beneficiaries have been able to notice differences. In fact the food emergency of 2002-3 which contained unspecified amounts of genetic modification was considered by African governments to be different from other food aid and thus viewed with suspicion and as poisonous (Omamo, 2005). Such surreptitious distribution of and force-feeding Africans with GMOs has been understood in terms of the New American (27 October 2011) which stated that: "...the March 2009 UN Population Division Policy brief began with the statement, 'What would it take to accelerate fertility decline in the least developed countries?'" Also noted in the New American (ibid) is John Holdren's book of 1977 where he called for Eco-science in which he indicated support for forced abortions, sterilisation through infertility drugs or through the nations' drinking water or food.

The upshot of the above is that indigenous people across the world are demanding food sovereignty as the basis of their food safety and food security (Woodley *et al*, 2009; Fitting, 2013; Mushita, 2009). Such food sovereignty is tied to ownership and control of their indigenous land resources, it is connected to the notion that indigenous people's overall health, well-being and cultural continuity are related to their ability to eat traditional foods linked to their cultures and value systems, religious ceremonies and spirituality (Woodley *et al*, 2009). Food sovereignty is linked to the provision of access to nutritious and culturally compatible food and so food sovereignty seeks to alleviate hunger by creating sustainable,

localised, food-producing networks (Mushita, 2009). Thus, Fitting (2013) notes that food sovereignty is taken up by anti-GM activists in Colombia and rural producers' campaigns focus on maize as a symbol of sovereignty which activists believe is undermined by transgenic varieties of corn. Fitting (2013: 1-7) states citing Cleveland *et al* (2003) thus:

In Latin America, activists see transgenic maize as an embodiment of contemporary imperialism or neo-liberal globalisation-a foreign threat to "sovereignty" in different senses including self-governance, economic independence, cultural autonomy, and access to and control of native varieties and genetic resources...The unintended gene flow between transgenic corn and native varieties in Mexico was discussed by activists as contamination, a kind of genetic pollution or trespassing of unwanted living material that has, or could have, negative environmental impacts.

Thus, while Africans have since the colonial era been trained to shy away from their own indigenous food crops which now face imminent extinction (Demi, 2014), the same Africans have consequently been subjected to global food and pharmaceutical experiments as "guinea pigs" (Nhemachena *et al*, 2016; The Guardian, 25 August 2005; Benson, 10 June 2013). So Benson (10 June 2013) notes citing the example of Chad that some African children are being used as lab rats in experiments where some so called "humanitarian groups" forced the children to have the deadly MenAfrivac vaccine, which in many of them caused severe convulsions, paralysis or worse.

In the light of the foregoing, it is necessary to exercise caution with contemporary claims against epistemologies that differentiate, separate and distinguish things. The contemporary postmodern critiques of science which is accused of being steeped in binaries, separations, distinctions and differentiations are in fact meant to legitimise the non-separations of GMOs from organic non-GMO food, and all this conflation with deadly consequences for African consumers. Therefore, in California, U.S.A, Sundstrom *et al* (2002: 12) note that consumers are increasingly expressing the importance

of separating GMOs from non-GMOs. In California, the established National Organic Program grants certification, to separate and avoid commingling of organic and GMO rice. Sundstrom (2002: 13) states thus:

Organic products must be grown on land or media that have had no prohibited substances applied for the prior 3 years. The production area must have distinct buffer zones, boundaries and diversions to prevent unintended contamination with prohibited substances, including pesticides, transgenic crops, and sewage. Crops must be planted with organically grown seed...The crops and products must be harvested and handled at all points before sale to the consumer such that commingling and physical contact with nonorganic products and substances is prevented...The largest markets for U.S organic foods are in Europe, Japan and Canada. ...Currently the EU only allows imports of organic products from countries such as the United States whose national standards are recognised as equivalent to EU standards...The establishment of consistent national and international standards for organic production, identity preservation, and labelling will give producers and marketers clear guidelines and assure consumers that the organic products they buy have been produced in accordance with those standards.

In Africa, Global Research (21 April 2016) reports that on 21 May 2016, South Africans united to protest Monsanto's aggressive attempts to force genetically modified organisms and their chemical herbicides onto South African consumers and farmers. The march is reported to be part of a global mass pro-organic, anti-transgenic GMO campaigns against harmful effects of GMF, the toxic chemical herbicides used with them and the monopoly and ownership of our seed by Monsanto. The demonstration was further intended to demand the right to natural medicines and to support and promote small and organic farmers and local food webs. For many years now, South Africans have joined activists around the world to march against Monsanto, calling for permanent boycott of GMOs and other harmful agro-chemicals (BBC News, 11 June 2015; Mail and Guardian, 31 May 2013).

While some arguments have been proffered to the effect that African countries can simply put in place biosafety laws, the challenge is that the GMO producing transnational corporation, Monsanto, has been noted as influencing African biosafety laws. So, Natural Society (22 March 2015) states:

The report reveals the extent of Monsanto's influence on biosafety legislation in Africa, and the regulatory approval process for its GM products and the herbicides that go with them...One hot contention is that while Europe and some other regions have had tight biosafety laws on their books for many years, most countries in Africa have not. Only seven African countries now have biosafety regulations of any sort in place. It has been found that eco-farming beats GMOs for creating better crop yields-the sustainable, small scale system relies on natural growing methods which work better than GMO and other pesticide-based agricultural systems.

In this vein, The World Foundation for Natural Science (2017) persuasively argues that there is already enough food to feed 14 billion people on the planet and so the solution to Africa's hunger lies not in technology but in agro-ecology encompassing organic farming, including by African small-scale farmers.

Conclusion

In the light of the foregoing, African scholars are urged to exercise caution with theories that are not premised on African historical, cultural, social, economic and political experiences. It has been argued that postmodernism and poststructuralism promote the interests of global biotechnology transnational corporations that are producing and distributing toxic GMOs to the dispossessed and impoverished Africans. Equally, it is argued in this chapter that there is need to exercise caution about the emergent theories on sharing, the notions of sharing economies and solidarity economies do not appear smart, particularly when examined within the context of the expanding [toxic] GMO global distribution system. The notions of the sharing economy and solidarity economy pose questions

including about what exactly is to be shared. They leave one wondering about the safety of that which is shared. They also make one wonder about the constitutions of the sharing networks. Equally one is made to ponder about why sharing economies are being foregrounded in a context where Africans are increasingly concerned about restitution and reclamations of colonial dispossessions. It is argued in this chapter that in fact the notions of sharing economies and solidarity economies revolve around the logics of the postmodernist consumer [rather than producer] society that have been critiqued in this chapter. Underscored in the chapter is the point that what is most fundamental is not circulation or flows but to ensure that toxic waste is not circulated and that those that do not want the circulations retain their democratic spaces to stay away from toxic GMO food circulations.

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Dumping and Use of Second Hand Clothes: Imperialism and Social Identity Loss in Nigeria

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Introduction

The use of imported second hand clothes by Nigerians has been around for decades. This dates back to the early post-colonial period when ships of used clothes were brought into the Nigerian shores through Okrika, a sea port in Rivers State, Nigeria, thus, the name “Okrika” (meaning used clothes). In the pre-colonial period, Nigerians were known to dress in their local attires such as that which show-cased various cultural and ethnic backgrounds in the country but the arrival of European explorers brought with it, the European way of dressing which was over time acculturated into the Nigerian society and culture. Although second hand clothes are a contraband item in Nigeria, it is usually moved into Nigeria illegally from neighbouring countries (Ojomoyela, 2015). While trading in second hand clothes seems to provide massive employment opportunities for the teeming population, since it is a means for many Nigerians to afford this basic necessity, dumping of second hand clothes by developed countries in Nigeria seems to be a tool of imperialism by the former colonial masters to make Nigeria more dependent on them for her survival.

In addition to this, the increasing demand for these clothes seems to have also eroded the rich cultural heritage in Nigerian attires which was traditionally preserved for centuries thereby making many in the country lose their traditional cultural attire and the attendant identity to that of Europeans. This chapter therefore examines the factors responsible for the continued increase in demand for second hand clothes among many Nigerians in the country and how the dumping of second hand clothes in Nigeria is being used as a tool for imperialism. The chapter employs the Social Identity theory in

explaining how the use of second hand clothes in Nigeria has led to the loss of social identity of the traditional African traditional dress culture. It suggests steps that can be employed to eradicate the dumping of second hand clothes in Nigeria and how the lost identity of the rich cultural traditional Nigerian attire can be restored.

The Nigerian Cultural Heritage

Nigeria is a country blessed with a rich cultural heritage and diverse ethnic firmament. Nigeria is home to a mixture of ethnic groups with Arabic and Western European influences. Nigeria has a combination of traditional culture and international urban sophistication. The country is shaped by Nigeria's multiple ethnic groups of over 250 ethnic groups and languages (Paul, Simons, and Fennig, 2016). The four largest ethnic groups in Nigeria are the Hausa and Fulani in the North, the Igbo in the Southeast, and the Yoruba predominate in the Southwest. The Edo people who are mostly Christians are the most frequent in the region between Yoruba land and Igbo land.

Other ethnic groups sometimes called 'minorities' are found throughout the country especially in the north and the middle belt areas of the country. The Fulani and the Hausa are predominantly Muslim while the Igbo, the Efik, Ibibio and Annang people are predominantly Christians. However, the Yoruba are either Christian or Muslim. Majority of Muslims in Nigeria are Sunni and are concentrated in the northern part of the country, while Christians dominate in the southern part of the country (Pew Forum, 2010).

Figure 1: Map Showing Diverse Cultures and Languages in Nigeria



Source: https://lib.utexas.edu/maps/africa/nigeria_linguistic_1979.

The Nigerian Dress Culture

The traditional attire of Nigerians differentiates one culture from another. It is the outfit that also distinguishes Nigerians from other Africans. The costume for the women is characterised by its elaborate head piece, wrapper, which is worn like a skirt and a scarf that matches the headgear or the skirt. However, the designs of the garments vary from one tribe to the other. With more than 250 ethnic groups, with varying languages and customs, the largest ethnic groups are the Hausa/Fulani, Yoruba, Igbo (Ibo), accounting for 62 per cent of population. Even though the prints and patterns of the garments of these cultures may be similar, the designs are different. Hausa/Fulani are found in the Northern part of the country, while Yoruba and Igbo are found in the West and East of the country, respectively. Some of the materials used to make Nigerian clothing are lace, cotton jacquard, adire, tie dye, Ankara, b Yoruba Traditional Dress Culture. The dress patterns of the three major cultures in Nigeria are elaborated in the next section.

The Yoruba Traditional Dress Culture

The Yoruba's have legendary types of clothes that make them distinct from other cultures around them because they take immense pride in their attire, for which they are well known. Clothing materials among the Yoruba's traditionally come from processed cotton by traditional weavers. The Yoruba's believe that the type of clothes worn by a person depicts the person's personality and social status, and that different occasions require different clothing outfits. The Yoruba's have a very wide range of materials used to make clothing, the most basic being the Aṣo-Oke, which is a hand loomed cloth of different patterns and colours sewn into various styles (Makinde, Ajiboye and Ajayi 2009).

Aso-Oke comes in three major styles based on pattern and coloration. They are: Alaari - a rich red Aṣo-Oke, Sanyan - a brown and usual light brown Aṣo-Oke, and Ètu - a dark blue Aṣo-Oke. Other clothing materials common among the Yoruba's include: Ofi – a pure white yarned cloths, used as cover cloth and can be sewn and worn. Aran - a velvet clothing material of silky texture sewn into Danşiki and Kẹmbẹ, worn by the rich and Adirẹ - cloth with various patterns and designs, dye in indigo ink (Èlu or Aro). Agbada clothing historically worn by Yoruba men.

Clothing among the Yoruba's is gender sensitive. For example men wear Bùbá, Esiki and Sapara, which are regarded as Èwù Àwòtélé or underwear, while they also have Dandogo, Agbádá, Gbariye, Sulia and Oyala, which are also known as Èwù Àwòlékè / Àwòsókè or overwear. Some fashionable men may add an accessory to the Agbádá outfit in the form of a wraparound (Ìbora) (Steele, 2006 and Lawal 2015). They also have various types of Sòkòtò or native trousers that are sown alongside the above-mentioned dresses. Some of these are Kẹmbẹ (Three-Quarter baggy pants), Gbáanu, Sóóró (Long slim / streamlined pants), Káamu & Sòkòtò Elemu.

A man's dressing is considered incomplete without a cap (Filà) which may come in the form of Gobi (Cylindrical, which when worn may be compressed and shaped forward, sideways, or backward), Tinko, Abetí-ajá (Crest-like shape which derives its name from its hanging flaps that resembles a dog's hanging ears. The flaps can be lowered to cover the ears in cold weather, otherwise, they are

upwardly turned in normal weather), Alagbaa, Oribi, Bentigoo, Onide, and Labankada (a bigger version of the Abetí-ajá, and is worn in such a way as to reveal the contrasting colour of the cloth used as underlay for the flaps).

Women also have different types of dresses. The most commonly worn are Ìró (wrapper) and Bùbá (blouse-like loose top). Women also have matching Gèlè (head gear) that must be put on whenever the Ìró and Bùbá are on. Just as the cap (Fìlà) is important to men, women's dressing is considered incomplete without Gèlè. It may be of plain cloth or costly as the women can afford. Apart from this, they also have ìborùn (Shawl) and Ìpèlè (which are long pieces of fabric that usually hang on the left shoulder and stretch from the hind of the body to the fore). At times, it is tied round their waists over the original one piece wrapper.

Unlike men, women have two types of under wears (Èwù Àwòtélé), called; Tòbì and Sinmí. Tòbì is like the modern day apron with strings and spaces in which women can keep their valuables. They tie the tòbì around the waists before putting on the Ìró (wrapper). Sinmí is like a sleeveless T-shirt that is worn under before wearing any other dress on the upper body. Clothing among the Yoruba people is a crucial factor upon which the personality of an individual is anchored. This belief is anchored in Yoruba proverbs. Different occasions also require different outfits among the Yoruba (Akinbileje and Igaro, 2010).

Igbo Traditional Dress Culture

Traditionally the attire of the Igbo generally consisted of little clothing as the purpose of clothing then was to conceal private parts, although elders were fully clothed (Achebe, 1958). Children were usually nude from birth till their adolescence (the time when they were considered to have something to hide) but sometimes ornaments such as beads were worn around the waist for medical reasons. *Uli* body art was also used to decorate both men and women in the form of lines forming patterns and shapes on the body. A traditional Igbo hat made entirely from wool.

Women carried their babies on their backs with a strip of clothing binding the two with a knot at her chest. This baby carrying technique

was and still is practiced by many groups of people across Africa along with the Igbo who still carry their babies this way. In most cases Igbo women did not cover their chest areas. Maidens usually wear a short wrapper with beads around their waist with other ornaments such as necklaces and beads. Both men and women wore wrappers. Men wore loin cloths that wrapped around their waist and between their legs to be fastened at their back, the type of clothing appropriate for the intense heat as well as jobs such as farming.

The Hausa Traditional Dress Culture

The Hausa people have a restricted dress code related to their religious beliefs. The men are easily recognisable because of their elaborate dress which is a large flowing gown known as Babba Riga and a robe called a jalabia and juanni. These large flowing gowns usually feature some elaborate embroidery designs around the neck. Men also wear colourful embroidered caps known as hula. Depending on their location and occupation, they may wear a Tuareg-style turban around this to veil the face (known as Alasho or Tagelmust). The women can be identified by wrappers called zani, made with colourful cloth atampa, accompanied by a matching blouse, head tie and shawl. The Hausa were famous throughout the Middle Ages; they were often characterised by their Indigo blue dressing and emblems. They traditionally rode on fine Saharan camels and Arabian horses.

The Genesis of Second Hand Clothes in Nigeria

In the past, second hand clothing from Europe and the North America was an important source of clothing well into the nineteenth century, until mass production and growing prosperity enabled more and more people to purchase brand new rather than previously worn garments (Lemire, 1997). However, when mass production of garments became readily available and at affordable prices, the trade in second hand clothing became export oriented. Consequently, charity shops responded to the clothing needs of the local poor. At this time, established charitable organizations became the single largest source of the twenty first century global trade in second hand

clothing, supplying both domestic and foreign second hand clothing markets through their collection efforts. These charitable organizations dominated the domestic second hand clothing retail scene in the 1960 and 1970s (Heike, 2005).

This period coincided with the long history of Nigerian colonization which came to an end in 1960. This was followed by the Nigerian Civil War of 1966. Developed nations such as France, United Kingdom and the United States of America are the sources of second-hand clothes (SHC) which are exported to Nigeria (Areo and Areo, 2015). The history of the entrance of second hand western clothing and its supplements known as Okrika among other names into the Nigerian market scene is traceable to the urge of becoming modern with Western education and modernity. It is also a symbol which their colonizers who were the role models in the Euro-centric setting represent.

Okrika is a port town and headquarters of present day Okrika local government area of Rivers State. The town is situated on a small island just south of Port Harcourt, the state capital, making it a suburb of the much larger city. It lies on the north of the Bonny River, as well as 35 miles upstream from the Bight of Biafra. The town can be reached by vessels of a draft of 29 feet or less (Onukwugha, 2013). The name originated among the Ibo-speaking people of South-eastern Nigeria. Until recently, the name was not derogatory; it derived from the fact that Okrika, a coastal town of South-eastern Nigeria, was believed to have had the largest consignment of second hand clothes donated by developed countries to meet the needs of victims of the Nigerian civil war. Second hand clothes were believed to have been dispersed from Okrika in the past to other parts of the country.

Some of the used clothes imported into the country according to (Areo and Areo, 2015) are male wears such as trousers in denim jeans, corduroy, blazers, shirts, jackets, suits, boxers, mufflers and stockings Face Caps. Female Cloths such as skirts, trousers, blazers, blouses, shirts, Skirt suits, trouser suits, dress suits, evening wears, wedding gowns, swim suits, underwear comprising of brassieres, pants, leggings, panty hose, camisoles and tights blouses, sweaters, jeans, slip-on, trousers, blazers, gowns, face cap, shirts, gowns, trousers,

mufflers, jackets, undies, stockings, ties, pants, shawls, camisole, baby layette, stockings, skirts, bowler, hats, brassieres, head wears, t-shirts, girdles, belts, knickers, skirt suits, blazers, scarves, mufflers. Children's second hand clothing include: baby dresses, layettes, shawls, stockings, trousers, dungarees, baby bonnets, christening gowns and party wears.

Figure 2: Pictures Showing Second Hand Clothes Market in Some Locations in Nigeria



Source: Areo and Areo (2015).

Why Do Nigerians Use Second Hand Clothes

Poverty

Poverty is a multidimensional phenomenon. According to (World Bank, 2001) poverty can be viewed from such dimensions as a lack of opportunity, lack of empowerment and a lack of security. In Nigeria, widespread and severe poverty is a reality (National Bureau of Statistics, 2011). It is a reality that depicts a lack of food, clothes, education and other basic amenities. Severely poor people lack the most basic necessities of life to a degree that it can be wondered how they manage to survive (Ucha, 2010). Poverty in Nigeria is rising with

almost a 100m of its population living on less than \$1 per day despite a strong growth in Africa's second largest economy (Daniel, 2011).

In 2010 compared with 54.7% in 2004 the percentage of Nigerians living in absolute poverty – those who cannot afford the bare essentials of food, shelter and clothing – rose to 60.9% (National Bureau of Statistics, 2011). Although Nigeria's economy is projected to continue growing, poverty is likely to get worse as the gap between the rich and the poor has continued to widen. Little wonder (Kale, 2012) posited that poverty in Nigeria is a paradox – that despite the fact that Nigeria's economy has continued to grow, yet the proportion of Nigerians living in poverty has continued to increase every year.

A Source of Employment

The International Labour Organization (ILO) defines the unemployed as members of the economically active population who are without work but available for and seeking work, including people who have lost their jobs or who have voluntarily left work (IBRD, 2009). According to (Morio and Zoctizoum, 1980), unemployment is seen as works available for employment whose contract of employment has terminated or been temporarily suspended and who are without a job and seeking paid employment; persons never previously employed whose most recent status was other than that of employee, together with persons who had been in retirement, who were available for work during the specified period and were seeking paid employment; persons without a job and currently available for work who have made arrangements to start a new job at a date subsequent to the specified period; and persons temporarily or indefinitely laid off without pay. The expression of these definitions is that persons who are without paid jobs to earn decent living are unemployed. In Nigeria's unemployment scenario, the young school leavers of all categories are the worst hit (Nwagwu, 2014). Starting a second hand wears reselling business in Nigeria is a practical way to make money. Many young and unemployed Nigerians are making money from this investment (Abe, 2014).

The Quest for Brand Names

The unusual craze for foreign products by Nigerians cannot be overemphasized. Nigerians in their multitude are crazy for anything foreign (Owolabi, 2016). These include expensive clothes and designer wears with popular brands which they may not be able to afford as a result of the prevailing poverty hitting the country could readily be found in second hand clothes markets. Therefore, for individuals who “worship” the tags on clothing, they are likely to find many recycled, brand-name clothes available. It’s a great way to suit stylish needs and yet having to save for other needs (Froelich, 2013).

Affordability

In a country with abject poverty, with a large proportion of its population living on less than \$1 per day (Daniel, 2011) and people can hardly afford to feed and clothe themselves (Ucha, 2010), second hand clothes would surely be the best option for people to clothe themselves. This is because; second hand clothes are far more affordable than new locally made as well as imported clothes. According to (Froelich, 2013), used clothes are usually 50% cheaper to get and therefore the poor will have more to save and spend on other pressing needs rather than spending so much on buying new clothes.

Good Quality and Durability

Second hand clothes categorised ‘grade one’ are generally more durable being made from higher quality fabrics that do not fade quickly with washing (Didymus, 2012). Many Nigerians, therefore, don't think it makes sense to buy clothes made from locally produced fabrics that are more expensive but fade quickly with washing. Many relatively poor or absolutely poor people prefer second hand western clothing over new Chinese or Indian made clothes because it is often of a better quality and it has associations with the western cultural imperative that matches what they see on the media (Adow and Asenault, 2012). Many cannot compromise quality which they believe they can find in second-hand clothes (Bienose, 2017).

The Imperialism in Second Hand Clothes

The history of the entrance of second hand western clothing in Nigeria known as okrika is traceable to the urge of becoming modern with Western education and modernity. The countries of sub-Saharan Africa in which Nigeria is included are the world's largest second-hand clothing destination, receiving close to 26% of total world exports in 2004 (United Nations, 2006). Second hand clothes have been said to be a symbol of colonizers who were the role models in the Euro-centric fashion (Areo and Areo, 2015). Most of the second hand clothes brought into Nigeria originate mostly from the United States, United Kingdom and other European countries while others come from relatively affluent Asian countries such as South Korea, Dubai, and China (Didymus, 2012).

Second hand clothing business in Nigeria which started as a necessity or means to an end has now become a global phenomenon, succumbing to pressures dictated by fashion, civilization, modernity, necessity, and survival instinct. In second hand clothing, utility, styles and status found common expression (Greyson and Crewe, 2005). Most of the developed nations such as France, United Kingdom and the United States of America from where second-hand clothes are exported to Nigeria were observed to have derogatory names given to it like "Cast Off", "Previously Owned" among others with connotations of devalued or degraded products (Callahan and Paoletti, 1999).

The economic impact of used clothing imports in Nigeria cannot also be overemphasised. This has help to forge a relationship of dependency on the West and in many ways prevent Africa from developing. Although, Nigerians were not taught how to dress by colonisers because they already had various forms of clothes, whether skins and hides or bark-cloth, yet, part of the colonial ideology was the labelling of the entire culture of the colonised as uncivilised (Mwesigire, 2015). Thus, clothes also became an ideological battlefield for superiority and inferiority. Despite attainment of political independence, cultural aspects of the colonial project have not been as scrutinised. Thus, much of the colonial cultural ideology

that perpetuates discourses of the inferiority of African culture is still experienced in postcolonial societies (Mwesigire, 2015).

At the turn of colonialism, Nigerians were meant to produce their own clothes and other basic goods to help industrialise and develop economies as happened in China and South Korea, but in the 1980s and 1990s, clothing industries declined and imports of used clothes increased. According to (Haggblade, 1990) second hand clothing consumption practices in many parts of Africa including Nigeria are shaped by the politics that regulate these imports and by distinct regional conventions concerning bodies and dress. They are forced to liberalise their economies under political pressure from banks and governments in the West who had earlier lent them money, and to whom they owed massive interest repayments.

Also, donated underwear raise issues of human dignity (Brooks, 2015), Brooks says that whilst used t-shirts, jeans and dresses can satisfy a basic need for affordable clothing, they ultimately help keep people in poverty. Second-hand clothing maintains the status quo; it doesn't help the poor get richer; it just keeps things as they are at the moment (Brooks, 2015).

A Loss of Social Identity

According to (McLeod, 2008), Social identity is a person's sense of who they are based on their group membership. A social identity is the portion of an individual's self-concept derived from perceived membership in a relevant social group. The culture of a group plays a huge role in their social identity. While culture is the totality of learned, socially transmitted customs, knowledge, material objects and behaviour such as ideas, values, customs and artefacts of a group of people (Schaefer, 2002), it also entails patterns of human activities and the symbols that give these activities significance. It determines what people eat, how they dress, what beliefs they hold and activities they engage in. It is the totality of the way of life evolved by a people in their attempts to meet the challenges of living in their environment, which gives order and meaning to their social, political, economic, aesthetic and religious norms and modes of organisation thus distinguishing people from their neighbours.

Culture can be transmitted or acquired through information or symbols. Cultural identity is those attributes, behavioural patterns, lifestyles, social structures and norms that distinguish a people from other peoples (Omekwu, 2003). These are passed on or inherited from one generation to another (cultural heritage), or horizontally passed on from one society to another through such agents as globalization. The ways in which people dress have been described as a mirror of the culture of the people in any society (Perani and Wolff, 1999: 25). Although, cloth tend to meet the basic need of people just as shelter (Payne, 1965) dressing symbolizes the practices of the society, bounded by the same geographical location, sharing the same cultural values. How people dress also serves as a measurement of self and personal worth, occupation, social value, standard of economic value, definition and negotiation of political power, religious signifier and repository of supernatural powers as well as indicator of culture and changes (Perani and Wolff, 1999: 28). Thus, relinquishing the Nigerian traditional dress culture for the western ways of dressing is a total loss of social identity, which has been enhanced through the massive use of second hand clothes by Nigerians.

Social Identity Theory

Social Identity Theory was originally formulated by Tajfel (1979) and Turner (1986). The theory explains the concept of a social identity as a way in which to explain intergroup behaviour. According to the Social Identity theory, groups (e.g. social class, family, football team etc.) which people belong to are important sources of pride and self-esteem. Groups give us a sense of social identity: a sense of belonging to the social world. In order to increase our self-image, we enhance the status of the group to which we belong.

Resting on this proposition, Nigerians may be said to have lost their social identity by embracing the western way of dressing. The feeling of cultural inferiority to the western dress culture mortified the Nigerian traditional dress culture and replaced it with that of the western world. This invariably led to imperialism and continuous control of Nigerians by their colonizers. Even after many years of

independence, the pattern of our trade and political grip still tend towards the western society.

The Way Forward

Enforcing the ban on the Importation of Second Hand Clothes

Although it is true that importation of second hand clothes has been banned by the Nigerian government from being imported into the country (Adow and Arsenault, 2012), enforcing this law seems to be a mirage. Most of these clothes are still being smuggled into the country from neighbouring countries through the porous borders of the country (Ibrahim, 2017). Second hand clothes should not only be banned from the country, the government and relevant agencies in the country should take it as responsibility that they do not get into the country. This will go a long way in ensuring that the influx of these clothes is reduced to the barest minimum in the country.

Import Substitution

The government of Nigeria should encourage mass production of quality clothes in the country by investing massively in the Nigerian textile industry. Private investors must be encouraged to invest in this industry by giving them financial support and creating a conducive environment for them to operate. Aside, infrastructural development such as power, good roads that would support the industry to thrive must be a major priority of the Nigerian government if a positive change in this direction must be realised.

Leadership by example

One other way to eradicate the dumping and use of second hand clothes in Nigeria is for the leaders in the country to live by examples to the populace by patronizing local made clothes and local fabrics such as those made in Aba South-Eastern Nigeria as well as the Yoruba Aso-Oke, the Adire (tye and die) and many other local fabrics made in the country. We could recall during the President Olusegun Obasanjo's regime in 2003, Ankara local fabrics was encouraged by the President by wearing the cloth during occasions including formal

events (Oyedele and Obisesan 2013) and as such many Nigerians followed suit and this local fashion trend is still in vogue till date.

Reducing Poverty Rate

Poverty is endemic in the Nigerian society and has eaten deep into the people as many Nigerians cannot afford to eat three square meals per day not to talk of affording new clothes to wear (National Bureau of Statistics, 2011). If the dumping and use of second hand clothes in Nigeria must be eradicated, then it is imperative for the government of the country to reduce to the barest minimum the poverty rate in the country. If poverty rate is reduced in the country, then many Nigerians would be able to afford new clothes and would not need to depend on used clothes dumped into the country by foreign countries

Cultivating the Spirit of Patriotism

One other key way to eradicate the dumping and use of second hand clothes in Nigeria is for Nigerians to cultivate the habit of patriotism. Until Nigerians value their own country, the culture and the goods and services provided locally, eradicating the dumping and use of second hand clothes in the country would be a mirage. Nigerians should be proud of their cultural heritage and desist from feeling inferior to Western cultures and ways of life. This will go a long way in sustaining the cultural values of the Nigerian society in which dressing culture is a key variable.

Conclusion

This chapter has explored the dumping and use of second hand clothes in Nigeria as imperialism to the country and also loss of social identity. The chapter examined extensively the Nigerian heritage, the Nigerian dress culture with special emphasis on the three major ethnic groups in Nigeria that is Hausa, Igbo and Yoruba. The chapter also traced the origin of second hand clothes in Nigeria and the various types of second hand clothes being imported into the country.

Furthermore, the factors responsible for the continued increase in demand for second hand clothes among many Nigerians in the country were explored. The chapter also examined the dumping and use of second hand clothes as a tool for imperialism and loss of social identity was also examined. Lastly, the way out of this predicament was suggested in the chapter. Some of the suggestion made include: enforcing the law prohibiting second hand clothes in the country, import substitution, leadership by example, reducing poverty rate and cultivating the spirit of patriotism.

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Meddling African Personhood and Aesthetics with Artificial Facial and Body Enhancement: Exploring Conceptions of Beauty by VaTsonga Women in Zimbabwe

Steyn Khesani Madlome & Munyaradzi Mawere

Introduction

It is really a matter of concern when people have lost faith in their God-given [natural] beauty and rather make strenuous efforts to pursue the artificial beautification, which is not only alien but meddle with their traditional conceptions of personhood and aesthetics. Such is a growing trend now common in women in the Chiredzi District as with many other parts of Zimbabwe and beyond, where most women feel inadequate and uncomfortable with their natural appearance. There seem to be discontinuity in substitutionary terms where “tradition is set aside and cultural mixing looked down upon; Africanity is rejected and Euro-modernity embraced; futures are replacing the past as cultural reservoir” (Piot 2010: 16). Most of the women who have fallen in love with artificial beauty generally apply some chemicals/substances on their faces and bodily marks besides dressing in a way which they believe makes them look more attractive than their [women] counterparts who continue hanging high on the “traditional” conceptions of beauty. Worse still, their counterparts though continue with their traditional beliefs, have to some extent also become used to this persisting wave of change which threaten to substitute the traditional way of beauty enhancement such that they sometimes appreciate this “artificialised” beauty which is enhanced by chemicals or other artificial and foreign substances.

Yet influential as is, this issue of consumerism among the VaTsonga women of southern Zimbabwe is a threat to their health, the VaTsonga (also known as Tsonga) traditional conception of personhood, and most importantly their cultural fabric. The refusal

by some Africans to backslide into the traditional values has long frustrated some traditionalists and African governments alike. It threatens to tear apart the cultural values and identities of the African people unless we learn to think beyond the politics of cultural imperialism and identity. The VaTsonga, like other Africans are always seen on the receiving end in as far as the politics of consumerism is concerned. This is so given that they are not producing enough products to market to the West as the latter has outpaced local productions. However, research is awash with reports that most of these chemicals/substances used to enhance beauty have dreadful side-effects which affect the wellbeing of victims in one way or another (see Mubaya and Mawere: this volume; Bray 2002; BBC 2013). This again, has a negative impact on the VaTsonga traditional conception of personhood and beauty, since the VaTsonga identity and culture lie in the beauty of women. The use of foreign substances make them appear as if they are alien to their own culture. It also makes it difficult to identify them as VaTsonga as their identity mark is lost in the artificial enhancement as they try to mimic foreign cultures. This reinforces Gyekye's (1997) observation that "mentality almost invariably leads many Africans to prefer European things-values, practices, institutions, and so on – even if a closer look might suggest that the equivalent African 'thing' is of comparable worth" (p. 27).

In the light of this background, this chapter discusses traditional ways of maintaining good looks in bodies by avoiding artificial and foreign enhancement agents which have some long term effects. More specifically, the chapter interrogates, using the case study of the VaTsonga women, the [traditional] African conception of personhood and beauty while putting to task the idea of artificial beauty enhancement. In this whole attempt, the chapter offers a counternarrative of the works and reports by many Western manufacturing industries which give the impression that artificial beauty enhancement is without side-effects. In so doing, we bring phenomenological insights to bear on thematic issues on personhood and aesthetics as rupture, which already, but inadequately, suffuse studies of aesthetics and identity. We, thus, demonstrate, with some profound dexterity, the importance of sticking to the concept of

African beauty among the VaTsonga people, as compared to applying artificial substances on their bodies – substances which do not only threaten their traditional conception of beauty but harmful to their health.

Beautifying marks such as *madeba*, *makanja*, *swibayana*, among others, are discussed in this chapter as having been tested in time and passed traditional ways of beauty enhancement among the VaTsonga people of southern Zimbabwe. While interrogating the excessive use of artificial products by indigenous Africans, the chapter argues using the case of the VaTsonga women, that the traditional ways of enhancing beauty were not only successful in beautifying women, but never had side-effects as compared to contemporary artificial enhancements, which among other things, have caused health problems and identity crisis among many Africans.

Afrocentricity and the Concept of Personhood and Aesthetics

The Afrocentric theory (also known as Afrocentrism) plays a pivotal role in articulating issues of African personhood and aesthetics as it argues from an African perspective. Besides, it is a response to global (especially, Eurocentric/Orientalist) attitudes about African people, their historical contributions and way of life (Asante 1988).

In much the same way Afrocentrism revisits the history and agency of the African people with an African cultural and ideological focus as opposed to imperialistic ideology of the global north which have tried to dominate the African people in all spheres of life, this chapter shows how important and adequate the VaTsonga beauty (as other African conceptions of the same) is without any exotic beauty enhancers. Using the same ideological front of Afrocentrism, we decry the backsliding into Western values by some Africans. The argument here is that as long as the VaTsonga recognise themselves as a people, they should know that they are culturally unique, adequately beautiful and equally human [to the European people]. Our understanding of adequacy, however, should not be mistaken to mean advocacy of stasis and resistance of change. While we appreciate change and the fact that culture is dynamic, we argue that

the change should never affect the core of a culture but only its periphery. Put differently, change should always bring positive benefits; otherwise the change will be considered negative and unworth appreciating. Such is the case with change brought about by artificial substances applied on bodies by some VaTsonga women as beauty enhancers. The change ushered in foregrounds Eurocentrism while troubling the idea of cultural and communal identity as aptly captured by Mbiti (1969) thus:

Only in terms of other people does the individual become conscious of his own being, his own duties, his privileges and responsibilities towards himself and towards other people...The individual can only say: 'I am, because we are; and since we are, therefore I am'.

More so, the change pits against Afrocentricity, especially as it asserts the central role of the African subject within the context of African history and its quest to remove Europe from the centre of the African reality (Asante, 2009). Since the Vatsonga are part of African history and culture, the chapter holds firmly to the Afrocentric idea by pointing out that beauty can be defined in an African context without giving any reference to the European concept of aesthetics and personhood. Any attempt to measure African beauty using a European scale will tantamount to identity and cultural crises. It is in fact, this observation that prompts African scholars like Karenga (1993) to note with concern that “ours is a cultural crisis” (p. 278). It is in fact a cultural crisis that may result in “cultural atrophy” (Ekwuru 1999; Mawere and Mubaya 2016) – the death of the African cultures – and identity mismatch. In the same understanding, we urge that, for purposes of maintaining African identity, the VaTsonga and other Africans should not try to be what they are not and what they cannot be under “normal” circumstances. Instead, they should appreciate their uniqueness and value their identities as a people.

Beauty and Artificial Enhancement: Through Historico-critical Lenses

Eric Wolf (1982) and Johannes Fabian (1983) have done a great job to demonstrate to the world that the once commonplace notion that certain societies lack history, dynamism and change is absurd. Their groundbreaking work has shown beyond reasonable doubt that society is dynamic and change inevitable in all human societies, even in those societies where local encounters with global forces are non-existent. As such, the history of humanity around the globe shows that people have always adopted different ways ranging from applying [on their bodies] various skin lightening creams and powders to putting on jewelleries and tight-fitting clothes in a bid to enhance and showcase their beauty. There is no known universally accepted historical account of the development of the practice of beauty enhancement except the general consensus that in “modern” Africa, artificial enhancement was first embraced by prostitutes who wanted to increase their marketability in the commercial sex industry.

In America, for instance, artificial beauty enhancement emerged as a result of the quest to be unique, enhance and fantasise beauty. In her study of African-American women, Okafor (2006) shows how women turn themselves into objects in their bid to attract their opposite sex using artificial hair or by making their hair “more attractive” using artificial ways. . She finds out that in a survey on self-esteem which was conducted in America in 1998, African American women had a lower self-esteem than the Caucasian women. Okafor argues that the higher esteem in the latter was due to the fact that, Caucasian (light coloured or ‘white’ skin) women are mostly used as TV personalities in America which gives them pressure to enhance their beauty as they try to be more appealing to the popular culture. This could be the reason why they are preferred as TV personalities than their African American counterparts, thereby forcing the latter to look down themselves and imitate their Caucasian counterparts.

Okafor goes on to talk about how African American women trying to look differently by changing their skin colour using skin-lightening lotions and other agents such as hydroquinone, mercury

and steroids which have harmful side-effects on the users (Bray 2002; BBC 2013). Okafor argues, for example, that hydroquinone inhibits the skin's capacity to produce melanin which is a very important pigment in protecting the skin from the effects of the sun. As Okafor further argues, black skin has a large amount of melanin which makes it more resistant to the sun's rays which can burn the skin. Thus, skin lightening agents have the effects of wasting money when one now seeks health care which will be very expensive (Okafor, 2006). We argue with Okafor that even though some women are deceived to believe that skin lightening enhance beauty, it is in itself not improvement at all, since besides risking health one will have to fork out lots of money seeking medication when she is affected by these chemicals.

This resonates with ukessays.com's "Natural Beauty and Artificial Beauty Philosophy Essay" (2015) where the effects of artificial beauty on human beings are discussed First, this essay defines beauty as "the quality of being very pleasing to the senses" (p.1). The essay further notes that pressure comes mainly on women because they do not feel being adequate without applying any makeup on their bodies. Women would in fact want to appear beautiful all the time. This makes them wanting to enhance their beauty by applying makeup or through artificial beauty. There is distinction, however, between artificial beauty and makeup. Artificial beauty occurs when one alters her or his body whereas makeup does not change the original shape of the face or the body (ukessays.com 2015).

As already noted, artificial beauty – through plastic surgery and the use of artificial chemicals – normally comes with side-effects which are both costly and fatal. These side-effects are enough to justify our argument that artificial beauty in whatever form should never be accorded more value than natural beauty. It is on the basis of this same logic that we argue for the VaTsonga traditional conception of beauty as discussed in the ensuing paragraph.

The VaTsonga Conception of Beauty

As noted earlier, this chapter discusses traditional ways of maintaining good looks in bodies by avoiding these artificial and foreign enhancement agents which have some long term effects. Oduro (2013) in her article entitled “Beauty in Space and Time” carries out a study on how two groups of Ghanaians view beauty. In this article, she points out that there are differences between how Africans and Europeans view and define beauty. In her study, Oduro found that some Ghanaians view beauty as an internal thing rather than putting emphasis on physical appearance of a human being. This view is in line with the traditional African conception of personhood. It entails that beauty is not something that one possesses at birth, but rather attained after learning and interacting with other community members (Menkiti, 1984). This implies that a beautiful person is someone who possesses both outer and inner beauty. However, it was also established in her paper that there are some locals who have adopted the European concept of beauty, especially women who stay in peri-urban and urban areas, since life in these areas is a bit faster than that in the rural areas where there is not too much exposure to foreign cultures. The current study also gives a comparison of natural and artificial beauty as viewed amongst Vatsonga.

The current chapter also gives a comparison of natural and artificial beauty as viewed from the perspective of the VaTsonga people. Drawing from this comparison, this section discusses some ways in which VaTsonga can beautify their bodies in a traditional manner. This could be either facially or through clothing. The discussion is meant to instil a sense of self-esteem in the VaTsonga women (and other Africans) by showing how adequate natural VaTsonga beauty is as compared to artificial enhancement. This is worth discussing given that beauty among the VaTsonga and other African cultures goes beyond the physical body stature which can be seen by human eyes. In fact, African conception of beauty also reaches out to the moral aspect (Ikuenobe, 2016).

Similarly, the VaTsonga look at the facial expressions, the body, the head, the legs, arms, dressing, and most importantly the moral and social aspects of human being. This is different from the

European concept of beauty which focuses more on the body than anything else. It is for this reason that Okafor (2006), arguing in view of African American women, notes that the “black” women represent African ideologies as opposed to the issue of undermining traditional beauty standards by those who were groomed in the postcolonial or ‘so-called modern’ era which is now mistakenly thought of as the global beauty criteria. Okafor rather goes for ‘traditional African expressions’ which for her provides a broader perception of beauty unlike what is portrayed by the global beauty pageants and the media.

The [broader] African conception of beauty expressions which cover a wide range of aspects is the one traditionally embraced in the VaTsonga women and their culture in particular.

Below is the description of some facial and bodily marks as well as dressing codes traditionally embraced among the VaTsonga women of southern Zimbabwe.

Makanja (facial marks)

Makanja are facial marks in form of three or more dots on the forehead and on the cheeks. These are some kind of beautifying marks which were traditionally used by VaTsonga women of southern Zimbabwe. The dots were drawn on the face using a prickling thorn or hot object (and later needles) to pierce on some spots which were marked by black charcoal. The spots would remain swollen a little bit and black in colour such that they could be visible and attractive. Rikhotso (1985:69) supports the use of *makanja* when she says: “*Xikandza, a va tikhavisa hi makanja* [facially, they would beautify themselves using *makanja*]”. Mrs Maluleke, one of the interviewees for this study, concurs when she notes that “the process was a bit painful but many girls would go for *makanja* since it was an esteemed way of beautifying oneself in the old days”. She goes on explaining that these marks did not have any side effects once they were done when she says “*a ku ri hava switandzibaku swin’wana ehandle ka leswaku a swo vava eku sunguleni loko swi endliva*” (there were no any other effects besides that it was painful initially but when done the pain was over)”. Also, other VaTsonga women confirmed that those

who had *makanja* were respected by men and were more attractive than those who did not have these marks.

Nowadays, *makanja* are only seen in the elderly women or in very few girls who have gone through initiation schools in the rural areas, especially those which are very far away from town. Instead of these marks, women have opted to remain without any or some have adopted some tattoos which can be marked on their shoulders, stomachs or any other visible place. Due to westernisation, some women now resort to the use of face enlightening chemicals which have some negative effects. Lipman (2009: 1), one of the medical doctors in New York supports the view that face enlightening chemicals come with serious side-effects when he says:

Our skin is highly permeable. Less than one-tenth of an inch thick, skin is a porous membrane that is highly sensitive to toxic chemicals. What we put on our skin affects our health just as much as, if not more than, what we put in our mouths.

This means chemicals applied to a human body can penetrate into the body through the skin and end up causing some health problems. This has come as a result of viewing Western concept of beauty as better than the African one. Below, is a picture of a Tsonga woman with the *makanja* facial marks.



This a picture taken from Mublanguleni community (Zimbabwe) – 2017.

The seven dots on the forehead are *makanja* and are still found among VaTsonga women in Chiredzi District. Nothing is added once those marks are now visible on one's face. Women would add on other beautifying marks named *tinhlanga* on their bodies. These marks mostly decorate the women's stomachs as a way of making them more appealing and beautiful to their husbands. *Tinhlanga* body marks are described below.

Tinhlanga (body marks)

Tinhlanga are decorating marks which were marked at the back and around the belly of the VaTsonga women. These marks had beautifying effects and women with these marks were highly respected in the Tsonga society. These marks were done using some kind of a thorn with hooks (*xikaya*) and sharp object like a razor blade. Before this was done they would take an Ilala palm leaf to measure equal graduations on the belly or the back where the marks were to be decorated. *Tinhlanga* would then be marked following a straight line either in rows or columns. Some would even put a mark of a cross at the back. When these marks heal they would leave a smart pattern on the belly or back of the woman.

Culturally, women with these marks would be considered to be “real” women worth the respect of everyone in the society. One of the interviewees supported this idea when she says: “*loko u nga ri na tinhlanga a u hlekiwa va ku u fana na nhlampfi*” [if you don't have the marks they would laugh at you saying you are as smooth as a barbel fish]. In the VaTsonga culture it was not expected to see a woman who did not have *tinhlanga*. Men would be attracted to women who had these marks since they were part of beauty valued in their society. Another woman from Boli supports this by saying:

munbusankosi hi wona a wu endla leswaku loko papa a khoma a twa ku lava ku ya emasangvini na nsati wa yena. Wansati loyi a pfumalaka munbusankosi a hlekiwa ngopfu lero vanhwanakulobye a va nga pfumeli ku hlamba na yena enambyeni. [munbusankosi is the one which arouses a man after touching it. A woman who did not have the marks became a laughing stalk to the extent that other girls did not accept to go and bath with her at the river].

The word *muvhusankosi* literally mean the one who wakes up the chief. This means these marks have another function whose beauty is not seen by eyes, but which is highly valued by men.

Tinblanga can also be given the name *xikhomankata* meaning that they please men in bed when they touch them. In other words, it may mean that it keeps the spouse from not going out with other women. The picture below shows *tinblanga* done on the back.



This picture of a woman was taken from Chiredzi South Tsonga community 2017



Recently cicatrised Tsonga girl of Portuguese East Africa (Mozambique)

Source: Duggan-Cronin, (1935, vol. 4, plate 32).

The picture above is an old one, but it captures what is also found in Zimbabwe among elderly VaTsonga women. The method of *tinblanga* is no longer used these days by younger generations. They are now commonly found in women who are in their late fifties and

above. One woman, who had a dialogue with one of the authors of this chapter, confessed that she had the marks, but she felt that it is no longer acceptable because of her religious beliefs. However, she said the marks were meant for beautification as per the VaTsonga tradition. Due to Western influence and globalisation, the practice is now perceived as backward even though it was never associated with any side-effects and indeed was culturally considered to be a better way of enhancing beauty among the VaTsonga folk. As a result, women are now resorting to foreign ways of beautifying themselves, most of which have fatal side-effects. There are, for instance, VaTsonga women who pierce their bellies so that they can put some rings and different kinds of jewellery. In this case people are failing to embrace what was practiced in their own culture, but decide to follow what was brought to them by Europeans.

Such practices militate against the African concepts of personhood and beauty. As already noted, in traditional Africa beauty was not only considered as an art. Neither was it meant for any individual as is the case in the Western world. Instead, beauty was both an art and communal. It was for this reason that there were culturally acceptable and well defined beautifying bodily marks. This is aptly captured by Ikuenobe (2016) who notes that “art in African cultures is functional and has meaning, value and relevance in a social context” (p. 130). The VaTsonga women’s tradition of refusing to bath with someone who did not have *tinblanga* was an expression that art is communal besides being a way of encouraging them to follow suit. In other words, they meant that among the VaTsonga society beauty is viewed by the whole community in a similar way. It was not beauty for the sake of beauty, but was linked to other socially useful functions. By so doing, *tinblanga*, as with other beautifying marks, was a way of strengthening the Tsonga culture and African view of beauty at large. This is different from the use of rings which is just done for the sake of beautifying oneself only since they cannot serve the same purpose as *tinblanga*. Thus, as Iwara (2015) notes, the predominance of Western cultures following their imposition on African states since the dawn of colonialism poses a stumbling block to the growth, maturity and perpetuation of African cultures. This means a considerable number of African traditions found in the VaTsonga

culture have been either suppressed or eroded due to the adoption of Western cultures which were imposed on Africans.

Tsumani (face powder/ red ocher)

Powders such as *Tsumani* were also used to add an aesthetic value in Tsonga women. *Tsumani* is a kind of some indigenous face powder which is produced by grinding a kind of rock ore which is maroon in colour. *Tsumani* is mostly used for the purposes of certain traditional ceremonies, for instance, on the faces of initiates when they pass out from their training camp. This powder was also used by women who had just given birth to soften their skins when carrying their babies. Some of the powder was also smeared on the skin aprons which were used to carry babies so that the aprons become soft. *Tsumani* could also be used as medicine on babies who have measles as it managed to clear some rash on the bodies. Thus, as we can see *tsumani* was not just applied for the sake of beauty only, but it had some healing effects therefore social serving purposes.

Nowadays, ladies smear various face powders and lotions to enlighten their skins. Even those who have natural light skin do not feel contented as they also apply the powders and lotions. Okafor (2006) argues that some of these chemicals have harmful effects on the skin. The old Tsonga women confirmed that there no casualties recorded after the use of traditional powders and perfumes. They were the ones who produced their own powders and they knew where they had taken the ingredients from. Meanwhile, we observed that some women react and develop unsmooth skin after using modern creams and powders. This will be contrary to their expectations. Epstein and Fitzgerald (2009) note that despite some cosmetics being toxic, these products are highly consumed in the cosmetics industry. This shows the extent of being mentally colonised to the extent that one does not look on the negative effects of these artificial beautifying agents. In the section below, we discuss the *ndawani* which was used to provide a natural aroma without any added foreign chemicals.

Ndawani (a traditional herb)

Ndawani is a traditional perfume which was applied by girls who were not yet married by smearing on their bodies. It was taken from a plant with a very pleasant aroma. This *ndawani* was also useful to detect mischievous boys who would have touched girls since its smell would not go easily. Old people would interrogate the boy with such kind of an aroma because it was culturally known to be applied by girls only. Nowadays, a lot of perfumes have come on the market and they are being bought despite the fact that they are very expensive. These exotic products have taken precedence over traditional perfumes which were very cheap and readily available. This is a strong sign that Eurocentric beliefs have entered the VaTsonga community with a big bang and have been well embraced. People just use these products without even bothering themselves where they are coming from and how they were manufactured. This shows that Africans and VaTsonga in particular, have accepted to consume anything that comes their way from the West even if it is the worst (Mawere 2017). We now look at *vusenga* shown in the picture below.

Vusenga (bangles)



Vusenga were made of grass or metal. They were used mostly by married Tsonga women and mature girls who were about to get married. *Vusenga* were used as a way of enhancing beauty. There are different types of these bracelets and they are as follows: *Xidzingidzingi*, *xihatimana*, *xipoyilana*, *xitorofantini* and *xikhalamazvu* (Rikhotso, 1985:68). They were worn on the arms and also on the legs. The metal ones could also be covered by fur from cattle's tails. Women would put as many as they pleased depending on the ability of their men to make or buy these bracelets. The more the number of bracelets put on the arms the more attractive those women became.

Those with resources would also add another round wire with some colourful wooden balls called *timbhovhu* pierced and lined through it. They were found on a tree called *mbhovhu*. *Timbhovhu* would then be put on top of *vusenga*. Besides beautifying effects, VaTsonga had a belief that during the rainy season grass bracelets prevented illness such as headaches and gastric acids. However, this was not scientifically proven since it was just a belief.

Nowadays, most of the Tsonga women are no longer using the 'old fashioned' bracelets to enhance their beauty, but they would rather use arm and wrist bands. One of the women interviewed explained that due to Christianity these traditional bracelets are now regarded as pagan and demonic. This is in spite of the fact that some Christian churches such as Walter Magaya's Prophetic and Healing Deliverance Ministry also use bracelets which surprisingly are considered as "holy" or "anointing bracelets". In fact, contrary to the demonisation of the VaTsonga's *vusenga*, some Tsonga people are now using some kind of wrist and arm bands from various religious groups as a way of protecting themselves from evil spirits or they will be told that they will become prosperous. Where traditional bracelets have simply been replaced by those from the Christian churches, one wonders if the demonisation of the *vusenga* is really based on logical reasons and is indeed done in good faith. Basing on this observation, we maintain that the purpose that the traditional Tsonga bracelets served – that of enhancing beauty – remains the same as the one served by the church today. The only difference is that the idea of using contemporary bracelets (or bands) as blessing enhancers and

not beauty enhancers is the one which is foreign among the Tsonga society. The demonisation of community-based tradition – the traditional Tsonga bracelets – where foreign ones are widely embraced is absurd and paradoxical. It is clear evidence that, the VaTsonga as other Africans, are suffering from identity and cultural crises. This leads to the assertion that most of the “predicaments of Africa arise from colonialism and involve psychological, philosophical and identity crises” (Odugu, 2001:40); hence, our insistence that the quintessentially ‘modern’ ability of contemporary Africans to imagine their selves outside their existential contexts is potentially dangerous.

Another kind of bracelets that was widely used by the VaTsonga women are called *madeha*. These are discussed in the next section.

Madeha (ankle bracelets)

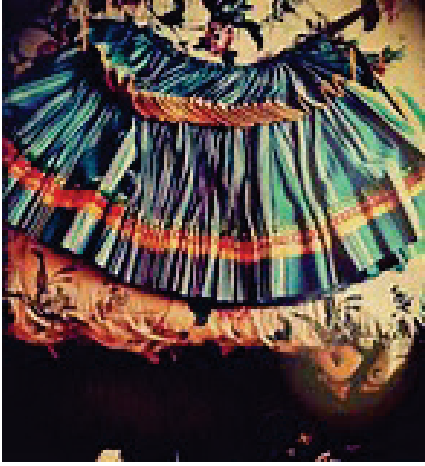
Madeha are the same as *vusenga*. The only difference is that they are bigger than *vusenga* since they are worn on the legs. A number of these bracelets would be put on the ankles as a way of enhancing one’s beauty. The more the number of bracelets worn the more attractive they became. The bracelets would produce a rattling sound when the bearer walks. Having more bracelets than others was a sign that somebody is from a rich family. Nowadays, *madeha* are mostly worn by elderly women. From the findings we harvested in the field, most of the younger women now perceive *madeha* as outdated and old fashioned. They have since adopted other ways of enhancing their beauty which are typically Western and more “progressive”.



The woman above is wearing *madeha* in her legs. They can also be used when women are dancing. *Xibelana* is another traditional dress that is found among VaTsonga women and is discussed here below.

Xibelana (traditional skirt)

Xibelana is a skirt with different layers and it is also decorated or can be worn together with beads. It is made of a fabric which has stripes of different colours. It is not every Tsonga woman who has the comfort of putting on *xibelana*. It is normally worn by the middle aged and the elderly Tsonga women. Girls put on *xibelana* on special occasions such as on pass out of initiates from their traditional school of initiation and on other social functions such as birthdays and graduation parties. This skirt can also be worn during a Tsonga dance called *xibelana*. This is more prevalent in South Africa than in Zimbabwe.



These pictures show xibelana skirt.

Taken from http://afropedia.wikia.com/wiki/Xibelani_Skirt

Xibelana was put in the waist and it was decorated with beads. Junod (1982: 43), a European researcher, describes a dress like this thus:

...navasati a va ambarile rhoko ya ricinda leri sasekisiweke hi vublalo bya mavalavala. [Women were putting on a dress which was decorated with beads of different colours]. These colours were meant to be attractive. Different kinds of beads were used to decorate the skirt. The most popular beads used were tikhwini.

Tikhwini (beads)

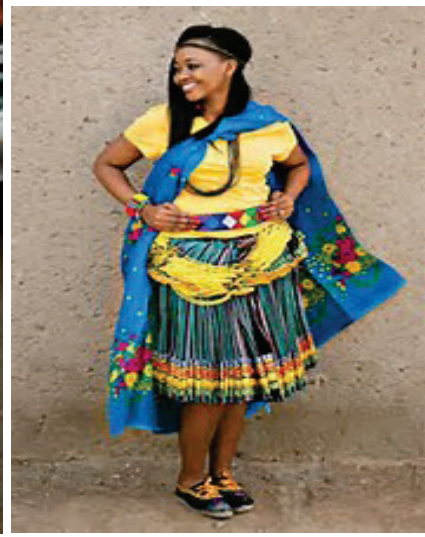
Tikhwini are some type of beads which are worn in the waist by the Tsonga women. The beads are used to beautify women's bodies. In the traditional Tsonga society, these beads were treated as special among women. They showed how caring the Tsonga men were because they were not just ordinary beads. N'wanghonyama, one of the interviewees echoed the same sentiments when she said: "*tikhwini a ti komba xiyimo xa le henbla xa vuxongi. [tikhwini was evidence of a higher level of beauty among women]*". Besides, they are a bit bigger than the ordinary beads as they are worn on top of *xibelana* to add value to the Tsonga woman in terms of beauty.



This picture above shows *tikhwini* which is blue in colour. Traditionally, these beads are worn on top of the skirt. Nowadays, *tikhwini* are mostly worn when women are dancing or on special functions such as weddings. Another beauty enhancer traditionally used among the VaTsonga women is *miceka*.

Miceka (colourful cloths)

Miceka are colourful cloths used to cover bodies of women. *Miceka* are put on top of *swibelana* or *n'wandbindhana* and crosses over the shoulders of a woman. Their various colours make them more attractive and many VaTsonga women go for these cloths. They are normally found mainly in these colours: light green, sky blue, yellow and pink. They can have various patterns on them as is shown in the pictures below.



The pictures above show different colours of *miceka* worn by women on top of *xibelana*. Women can also decorate themselves with *xifezani*.

Xifezani (head gear)

Xifezani is a head gear worn on the head to complete the beautifying process of a Tsonga woman. It is made up of beads which are woven to form a ring which fits on the head. This beads form patterns of different colours ranging from green, red, blue, yellow, black and white. Below is a picture showing *xifezani* on a woman's head.



This picture was taken from Mublanguleni community 2017.

Xifezani matches quite well with the beads worn in the neck and *tikhwini* in the waist. This head gear is now mainly worn on special occasions such as cultural gatherings, traditional dances, weddings, and parties. However, women of all age groups are still putting on this head gear as a way of enhancing their beauty. The next section summarises the findings of this study.

Conclusion and Recommendations

This chapter has discussed literature from different scholars and found that many foreign substances used for beauty enhancement have some side-effects. It was revealed that there could be long-term effects such as cancer of the skin, paralysis, ochronosis, liver damage, hyperpigmentation, thinning of the skin, skin irritations, skin infections, kidney damage, skin rashes, depression, anxiety, damage of the peripheral nerves, cutaneous diseases [unevenness or discolouration], inflammatory pigmentations [dark spots caused by injury or inflammation to the skin], and melasma [discoloured patches] (Mubaya and Mawere: this volume) and many more. The study found that most of the VaTsonga folk are no longer beautifying their bodies using traditional ways such as *makanja*, *tinblanga*, *tsumani*, *vusenga*, *madeba*, *swibelana*, *miceka*, *tikhwini*, *ndawani* and *xifezani*. The marks are now only found in elderly women who are in their late 60s and beyond. Some of these beautiful clothes have been relegated to the dancing floor only. In their daily lives they have since replaced them with exotic beauty enhancement agents. This could be facial or on their bodies. However, in other parts of the country, VaTsonga women are still holding on to their traditional views of personhood and aesthetic values. On another note, the study has found that Tsonga personhood is slowly being eroded, since some members of the society are no longer valuing their traditions. Beautifying oneself is now done for personal glory rather than for the good of the VaTsonga people and their culture.

The comparison between beauty among the traditional VaTsonga society and the artificially foreign enhanced beauty, points out that it is better to revive and stick to African beauty. This is more rewarding taking into account the fact that traditional VaTsonga

beauty enhancement have less side-effects (if any) as compared to the foreign adopted beauty enhancement. We further conclude that adopting artificial enhancers militates against African personhood besides undermining the Tsonga [and African] concept of beauty. Most importantly, sticking to the Tsonga concept of beauty will make the VaTsonga people earn a modicum of respect from other cultures. This safeguards the VaTsonga culture and saves it from erosion by the foreign cultures.

Basing on the findings harvested in the field and from other scholarly researches, this chapter recommends the use of traditional methods of enhancing African beauty, instead of foreign artificial beauty enhancements. The chapter also recommends the packaging of local products and market them in other parts of the country and beyond so as to popularise their cultural values, rather than being sole consumers of their own aesthetic values. Most importantly, the chapter encourages the VaTsonga women and other Africans at large to be contented with their Africanness, traditional attires and beauty enhancements which are free from side-effects and cost.

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Africa without Genetically Modified Organisms: On the Need for National Food Sovereignty

Misheck P. Chingoꝛba & Artwell Nhemachena

Introduction

Although famines have a long history in Africa, precolonial societies had their own mechanisms to recover without resort to Western “humanitarianism” including the logics of current genetically modified organisms (GMO) (Illife, 1990; Chitiyo, 2004; Meier, 2006; Davis, 2002; Seager *et al*, 2011; Warren, 2013). While some contemporary scholars present the discourses of climate change as the reason for the existence of GMOs, a number of scholars have noted that it was with colonialism that famines [that killed] became rampant. In this sense, famine which results in massive deaths is related to colonisation and the attendant loss of autonomy and sovereignty over own resources and heritages. Severe droughts, linked to colonial wars, and resulting in near extinction of North America are noted (Seager *et al*, 2011). Similarly, it is noted that famines afflicted more the colonially disinherited and impoverished in Africa, Asia and Latin America and these regions were at the epicentre of a calculated catastrophic collision between political forces of empire and climatic events that triggered the greatest human tragedy since the “Black Death” (Warren, 2013:1). While the popularisation and introduction of GMOs and related biotechnology is lauded by some, they ignore the important history of colonisation and imperial machinations that account for the famines in Africa (Davis, 2002; Meier, 2006; Warren, 2013).

Facilitating the neglect of African colonial history are drives toward green revolutions that ignore or neglect addressing land restitution and reclamations by Africans. In fact the West hopes via tinkering with technology, including biotechnology for GMOs, that Africans will always find means to make do with the barren and dry

pieces of land in reserves, which were allocated to them by colonial settlers. In other words, technology including biotechnology for GMOs is part and parcel of imperial efforts at containment and pacification of Africans who are consequently enjoined to worship Western technological fetishes in the vain hope that such technological fetishes will preempt African claims for restitution of land. Thus, the West is always poised to bring about innovations as long as these assist them in sidetracking African concerns about restitution of their fertile, arable and wet lands. In short, the West is always ready to create technological fetishes that help it defeat or preempt African claims for sovereignty and autonomy over their heritages including land. In so far as GMO biotechnology is deemed to circumvent nature, it is designed to circumvent African claims to their natural resources including land which in any case is already suffering the new scramble, in the form of current Western transnational land grabs, for African resources (Southall *et al*, 2009). In this vein, it would be naïve for Africans to think that when Westerners donate agricultural equipment, [GMO] food and other things, they [Westerners] are motivated by philanthropy – the motivation is more to keep or contain Africans in the barren, infertile sections of the continent to which they were resettled by the colonial settlers. In other words, the motive is to keep them prisoners in the colonial reserves or barren and dry communal lands, through imperial gifts of purported charity. The purpose is to prevent Africans from revolting and reclaiming their fertile and wetter regions currently monopolised by descendants of colonial settlers. And for beneficiaries of “charity” to see more value in the “gifts”, they need to be rendered increasingly vulnerable so that there is more appreciation of imperial, supposedly philanthropic, interventions even if these whittle down African sovereignty. Empire is about rendering the imperial subjects vulnerable and then, via charity, using that vulnerability to extract allegiance for empire.

Underscoring the importance of sovereignty and freedom from Spanish and American coloniality, Warren (2013: 1) notes thus:

Before the coming of Spanish and American colonialism and economic development and change to the Philippines, natural disasters

were isolated in space and time. After the advent of colonial rule, however, natural disasters involving the behaviour of global markets, large scale movements of rural populations and subsistence crises became systematic through space and time.

Similarly, indicating the importance of [food and national] sovereignty in Africa, Meier (2006: 209) states that:

...before the colonial period the regional food system seem to have been better adapted to deal with climatic stress...Thus, both vulnerability and resilience, but also the ways to explain disasters have to be understood in the context of the political, economic and social history of these African societies.

Given the above observations, one wonders whether it would not be advisable to understand current discourses about climate change in terms of leverage to Westerners and their biotechnology GMO-producing corporations. The Westerners and their transnational corporations get, via climate change discourses, leverage to dictate to Africa the courses of adaptation and resilience, and these courses to adapt include prescriptions of the toxic GMOs that will also serve to reduce the supposedly high African population. The fact that such climate change discourses arose in a context where GMOs have also emerged and being popularized is cause for concern by scholars who [are not parochial but] contextualize things broadly in order to properly understand them. Climate change and discourses about famines have been central to colonial effacement of precolonial African sovereignty. Similarly contemporary discourses about climate change and famine also coexist with Western antipathy to postcolonial African sovereignty that is suffering assaults in discourses about state weakness, state failure and so on. The discourses about African state failure, weakness and so on ignore the fact that Africa is failed by Westerners and their descendants who have not restituted African resources looted during centuries of colonisation. In other words, those that have failed for centuries paradoxically blame post-independence African states for supposed failures (Nhemachena and Dhakwa, 2017). Thus, the Westerners and

their descendants who failed to reconstitute colonially looted African resources including land and the attendant sovereignty, have turned around such that they are now offering toxic GMOs to Africans on the sham pretext that their post-independence, nationalist states and governments have failed to protect the African citizens.

Apart from showing how Africa can evade the toxic GMOs that are being distributed and circulated in the global south; the foregoing also stresses the feedback loops between national sovereignty and food sovereignty. Using the example of Zimbabwe, which has not only embarked on reclaiming ownership of the land by Blacks but also repeatedly asserted its national sovereignty against (neo-)imperial forces, this chapter examines food and national sovereignty in relation to Africa's contemporary struggles to evade GMOs. While some scholars and international institutions stress the importance of food security [as opposed to food sovereignty] *albeit* originating in a context of global [food] apartheid, this chapter argues that what is needed is African food sovereignty. It is argued that to erroneously consider contemporary global coloniality as capable of ensuring African food security amounts to being naïve since by extension it presupposes that coloniality and colonialism [current and past] ensured African security. The chapter argues that both previous and contemporary forms of [global and (neo-)imperial] colonialism and coloniality are ill-equipped to provide for African [food] security since they invariably and inherently, continue to, trample on the *raison d'être* of African national and food sovereignty. Thus, it is contended that [food] security is inconceivable without sovereignty and autonomy because logically it is only on the premise of being autonomous and sovereign that one is able to assert and pronounce one's security. If African sovereignty and autonomy are trampled and scrambled, the continent logically loses its ability to pronounce its security: otherwise it can only rely on pronouncements of security by others and *a fortiori* by those in the West that paradoxically retain their [national and food] sovereignty and autonomy. In this vein, the chapter argues that it is important for scholars to note the grave dangers of relying on colonizers [past and present] to define one's security: it is thus insecure to have one's [food] security defined and

determined by imperial and global coloniality of which history has already shown to be thoroughly hypocritical.

Recent events in Zimbabwe show that contemporary global coloniality is motivated less by the exigencies of fortressing African sovereignty and autonomy than by Western efforts to pulverize the African sovereignty and autonomy. Firstly, the land reclamations which constituted Zimbabwe's *modus operandi* for [food] sovereignty were mostly vilified including by Western sponsored media houses as well as by scholars, and 'civil' society organisations informed and animated by Western ideologies. Much of the media reports and scholarly literature produced during the crises in Zimbabwe are [simplistically] critical of the [efforts to] assertions of sovereignty and autonomy over African resources including land. Anything, including recurrent droughts and economic turmoil, that appeared to negate Zimbabwean assertions of sovereignty and autonomy has received much celebration in Western media, 'civil' society organisations and scholarship (Nhemachena, 2015). Thus, from the droughts (Nhemachena, 2015) to the cyclones that afflicted the country (The Herald, May 2017), those that are opposed to the country's assertions of sovereignty and autonomy were quick to draw paradoxes. Assertions of *national sovereignty* were deemed by Western animated reporters to be paradoxical to the attendant media and scholarly reports of lack of *food sovereignty* in the country. While they were quick to point out these paradoxes, they sadly neglected other paradoxes originating in the Western assertions of the existence of individual [food] autonomy, but trimmed of the imperative corollary of national [food] sovereignty. In other words, the conundrum is about how an individual can be held to have autonomy minus national sovereignty in a global context where the same Westerners are scrambling for resources belonging to African individuals and societies. Further, the Western animated reports neglected paradoxes such as inherent in Western distribution of toxic GMOs even as the distributors asserted their global "philanthropy". In other words, the situation in Zimbabwe underscored the [food] insecurity in the [food] "security" proffered in the context of global [food] apartheid within which assertions of the necessity of African [food] sovereignty were condemned.

A number of tenets of food sovereignty have been noted: firstly, it places people's need for food at the centre of policies by insisting that food is more than a commodity. Secondly, food sovereignty values food providers by supporting sustainable livelihoods and respecting the work of food providers. Thirdly, food sovereignty localises food systems by reducing the distance between suppliers and consumers. Fourthly, food sovereignty rejects the dumping and inappropriate food aid, resisting dependence on remote and unaccountable corporations. Fifthly, food sovereignty places the control of food in the hands of local food suppliers; it rejects the privatisation of natural resources. Sixthly, food sovereignty promotes knowledge and skills by building on traditional knowledge. Seventhly, food sovereignty rejects technologies that undermine local food systems (Food Secure Canada, 2012 cited in Gordillo *et al*, 2013). Thus, in food sovereignty there are presuppositions of state sovereignty in general and specifically in defining its food policies yet it is noted that the Food and Agriculture Organisation prefers food security rather than food sovereignty (Gordillo *et al*, 2013).

The World Food Conferences of 1974 and 1996, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) and organisations such as FAO stress food security which sadly ignores asymmetries of power in the global production and distribution of food. However, the ideas of food sovereignty [which is critical of asymmetries of power in global food systems] and food self-sufficiency are gaining popularity and support from the Latin American Parliament, the Andean Parliament, the Forum of Presiding Officers of National Parliaments of Central America and the Caribbean Basin. Food sovereignty and food self-sufficiency are also gaining support and popularity within some civil society organisations and new social movements. Also, countries like Senegal, India, Philippines, Qatar, Bolivia, Mali, Ecuador, Nicaragua, Venezuela, and Russia have expressed interest, and some of these have drafted national policy documents on food-self-sufficiency (Clapp, 2017; Pimbert, 2008; Patel, 2009; Gordillo *et al*, 2013).

On one hand food security is defined in terms of all people's ability to have physical and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food to meet their dietary needs and food preferences for

an active and healthy life (Gordillo *et al*, 2013). On the other hand, food sovereignty involves the central power of the state to be able to define its food policy without interference. Thus, food sovereignty is the right of each nation to maintain and develop its own capacity to produce its basic foods respecting cultural and productive diversity (Patel, 2009). In food sovereignty, as in food self-sufficiency, there is affirmation of the right to self-determination and endogenous development, and also defence of the political right of state to insulate themselves from the vagaries of world food markets (Clapp, 2017; Pimbert, 2006).

Although Zimbabwe was widely condemned by Western animated scholarship, media and ‘civil’ society organisations for asserting its sovereignty, it is imperative to note that absence of sovereignty and of food self-sufficiency implies vulnerability to Western controlled food markets. For this reason, Clapp (2017: 88) notes that: “Food self-sufficiency gained increased attention in a number of countries in the wake of the 2007-08 international food crises, as many countries sought to buffer themselves from volatility on world food markets”. In respect of food sovereignty which is also threatened by vulnerabilities to Western controlled food markets, the Peoples’ Food Sovereignty Network, (2002) cited in Patel (2009: 666) has noted that:

Food sovereignty is the right of peoples to define their own food and agriculture; to protect and regulate domestic agricultural production and trade in order to achieve sustainable development objectives; to determine the extent to which they want to be self-reliant; to restrict the dumping of products in their markets... Food sovereignty does not negate trade, but rather, it promotes the formulation of trade policies and practices that serve the rights of peoples to safe healthy and ecologically sustainable production.

While humanitarian and other forms of circulation of GMOs [which are deemed by some to ensure food security] are often glorified (Mawere and Nhemachena, 2017), the challenge is that such circulations, including of genetically modified food, produce erectile and other dysfunctions, in metaphorical and literal senses, in Africa.

In other words, to have erectile and other dysfunctions is in fact to be insecure for no one can be secure with such dysfunctions that threaten the continuity of African societies and genealogies. To possess the ability to erect logically entails the ability to be autonomous and to exercise sovereignty because without erections there cannot be any conceivable autonomy and sovereignty in the national and individual senses. To possess the ability to erect therefore, presupposes the possession of autonomy and sovereignty which the West has historically denied Africans for centuries. Denial of national sovereignty amounts to denial of national erections; similarly denial of continental sovereignty amounts to denial of continental erections and this logically connects with denial of individual autonomy summing up to denial of individual erections. In so far as GMOs deny individual erectile autonomy, they consequently threaten national and continental erectile sovereignty. Thus, while the consumption of GMOs is portrayed in terms of the right to food, it in fact amounts to “rights” to lose erections at various levels on the continent.

While erectile dysfunctions at the individual biological levels are traceable partly to consequences of consuming GMOs; erectile dysfunctions at national and continental levels are also traceable to nonorganic economic, social, political, cultural and religious policies which are engineered to generate general flabbiness in Africa. Thus, while consumption of GMOs is noted to result in impotence and infertility (Mawere and Nhemachena, 2017), similarly, the adoption and implementation of nonorganic International Monetary Fund and World Bank induced (neo-)liberal economic reforms in post-independence Africa generated economic and political institutional flabbiness on the continent. Also, much as during the colonial era when African Kings were rendered [metaphorically] flabby by colonists’ bribery of the Kings’ aides, including Lobengula’s Lotshe (Nhemachena, 2015), the (neo)liberal economic reforms saw the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund bribing some ministers including the Zimbabwean late finance minister Bernard Chidzero so that they would open the ways for the adoption of the package of [nonorganic] economic reforms (Andreasson, 2010) that rendered African sovereignty flabby. Owing to the consequent

flabbiness of African states and governments, there has been states' loss of policy space to NGOs (Mkandawire, 1999) some of which [NGOs] are now at the forefront of distributing toxic GMOs that also render Africans biological erectile flabbiness. While some organisations such as the World Bank, International Monetary Fund, transnational corporations and civil society organisations have delighted in condemning African states often on the basis of very narrow notions of corruption (Nhemachena, 2015; Hancock, 1989), it is also necessary to note the involvement of some of these organisations in corruption on the African continent that suffers tax evasions; bribery including by these organisations; the force-feeding of Africans with GMOs which are as nonorganic as the ideologies that are often uncritically deployed to corrupt African organic realities, including quests for autonomy and sovereignty.

The issue here is that Africa will find it difficult to reject toxic *nonorganic* GMOs if it continues to rely on toxic *nonorganic ideologies and epistemologies* partly because the toxic nonorganic GM foods are reinforced by toxic nonorganic ideologies and epistemologies that have been foisted on the continent for centuries since colonialism. To be able to reject nonorganic toxic GMOs, Africa needs to cultivate organic institutions and entities that reflect sovereignty and autonomy and that are ready to erect together with everyone else against the organisms that cause and perpetuate the flabbiness of Africa. Even the United Nations, which is in connection with [GMO producing biotechnology] transnational corporations that fund its programmes (Nhemachena and Warikandwa, 2017), cannot be entirely relied upon to free Africa from the depredations of global transnational biotechnology corporations. It follows that what Africa needs is more of sovereignty than the uncritical reliance on some external organizations and institutions. In the context of contemporary capitalist global apartheid, it would be naïve for Africans to assume that they can safely survive on global [food] circulations and flows given the existence of global food apartheid (Mawere and Nhemachena, this volume).

Zimbabwe and [Food] Sovereignty: Lessons on How to Avoid Genetically Modified Organisms in Africa

Africa has the potential to change the fortunes of its people as well as to rewrite the African historical, economic, political and cultural scripts. The Zimbabwean government, led by His Excellence, President Mugabe has already seen this possibility and has introduced a novel concept dubbed Command Agriculture which is set to exceed by far what had been the target yield in addressing one of the clusters of the Zimbabwe Agenda for Sustainable Socio Economic Transformation (Zim Asset) initiative (The Herald, May 2017). The ZimAsset initiative is meant to ensure that the Zimbabwean citizens have sufficient food reserves and more importantly food sovereignty is paramount if sustainable peace should be achieved. Efforts had to be made so that the citizens would not starve in a country such as Zimbabwe which is endowed with prime agricultural land. This is also consistent with the view of ZANU PF (ZANU PF Manifesto, 2008) that ‘the land is the economy and the economy is the land’ which out rightly confirms that genetically modified handouts cannot be the panacea to the food shortages that Africa is facing.

The nations of the global south are being fed with (neo-)colonial ideologies including about animism and [subjective] earth jurisprudence (Nhemachena, 2016; Nhemachena and Warikandwa, 2017) that are meant to disinherit Africans of ownership of their resources including land. However, Zimbabwe which considers the land to be a key resource and property for its citizens has shown the world the potential Africa is endowed with in reversing the continent’s (neo-)colonial script. It might not be long before Zimbabwe regains its bread basket status which could belie the forces opposed to the country’s contemporary assertions of national and food sovereignty. This strategy coupled with the collecting of rain water as can be seen in the Zimbabwean massive Tokwe Mukosi project (Chronicle, 19 January 2017) is testimony that what Africa needs is to come up with such initiatives to deal with its woes so that it does not bow to the whims of foreign domination that is given to dictating what Africa should do. The Tokwe-Mukosi project refers

to a vast dam project recently constructed by the government of Zimbabwe at a cost of \$260 million to deal with the perennial water shortages in Masvingo province. It is the largest inland water reservoir which is set to contain 1.8 billion cubic meters of water when full and this project is meant to complement the recent land reclamation by Black Zimbabweans. The dam is expected to also generate over 15 megawatts of electricity.

Realising the potential in the Command Agriculture, the Zimbabwean Government has gone further to appoint a board for the Cold Storage Commission, charged with the responsibility of spearheading the Command Livestock Programme. This programme is set to improve the national herd particularly in the communal areas, a strategy which is set to usher the ruralites into another dispensation (Saturday Herald, 22 April 2017). With this strategy, life in the rural areas is indeed set to be transformed in a great way. However, there is need for the country's leaders to be on the lookout for unscrupulous transnational corporations that may sell contentious GMO seed and GMO livestock feeds into the country.

The Zimbabwean Cold Storage Commission Board is also set to focus on the national strategic direction of rebuilding the national herd so that the country could revive its beef export markets, particularly to Europe and Asia (Saturday, Herald, 22 April 2017). The government will need to safeguard the country from the GMO producing Western corporations so that the national herd is safe from GMO feeds. This can only be possible through strict observance by state security agents of national security issues which are crucial in protecting the state. There is also need to be wary of GMO aid that could be extended by Western backed NGO agencies. In fact, The herald (21 August 2014) notes that some NGOs namely Louis Dreyfus from Netherlands, Toepfer International from German and GAPs knowingly imported GM maize from South Africa in spite of the fact that the government banned GMOs. There is thus need to ensure that the feeds and chemicals used in the Command Agriculture project are free from any pollution from GMOs. The West is known for poisoning Africans and their livestock as is evidenced by the liberation struggles in Africa were

people as well as livestock were poisoned (Mawere and Nhemachena, this volume).

It is most likely that once the Command Agriculture including Command Livestock is pursued for just two or so seasons, it will have positive ripple effects into the greater economy. This is exactly what Africa needs in order to rewrite its script and recover from the label, that appear to have stuck so well, that Africa is synonymous with poverty, lack of development and full of cultural imitation (Mazrui, 1980). Through the Command Livestock Programme Zimbabwe is expected to boast its dairy and beef industry. This initiative will be funded through a government- private partnership on a cost recovery basis.

Africa needs to be alert on a variety of facets that include management of crop diseases so that yields are not compromised. Recently the International Maize and Wheat Improvement Centre (CIMMYT) unveiled the maize lethal leaf necrosis (MLN) disease quarantine facility in Mazoe - Mashonaland Central Province of Zimbabwe. However, it is always necessary to ensure that the government is not tricked into dealing with organisations that are fronted by the Western biotechnology corporations such as Monsanto, Syngenta and others. So, experts in agriculture advised that MLN is such a destructive disease capable of causing overwhelming damage to a maize crop and is transmitted by insect vectors from infected maize crops (The Herald, 21April 2017). What this means is that timely interventions are required so that yields are not affected. This would ensure that Africa recovers from the food security and food sovereignty challenges which have dogged it for a very long time.

Talking about the crop diseases, the Zimbabwean Minister of Agriculture, Mechanisation and Irrigation Development noted thus:

Maize lethal necrosis is a devastating disease capable of huge economic losses wherever it occurs.... The commercial seed sector is expected to play a key role by introducing and delivering MLN free healthy seed to farmers (The Herald, 21April 2017).

In the 2016-17 Agriculture season, Zimbabwe invested just under US\$200 million and the government expects this to spur economic growth with grain deliveries expected at 3million tonnes, which is the highest production for Zimbabwe in decades (The Herald Business, 21 April, 2017). Thus, GMOs and associated humanitarianisms are for the Zimbabwean government not the ideal answer or solution to the problems of food sovereignty and food security that bedevil Africa.

The Zimbabwean approach in Command Agriculture, including Command Livestock, is an effort consistent with Pan Africanist notion of “African solutions to African problems” as opposed to having solutions prescribed by foreign forces such as the World Bank or IMF.

However, notwithstanding assertions of national, including food, sovereignty, the World Bank designed notion of ‘Ease of Doing Business’ (Corcoran, 2015), which is meant to support foreign direct investment, has been adopted in Zimbabwe. While this ‘Ease of Doing Business’ is championed by the Office of the President and Cabinet (OPC), there is also need to be careful with transnational corporations that come as investors since some of them could be the same biotechnology corporations which produce the toxic GMOs. Similarly, there is need to be mindful of the fact that colonization of Africa came in the guise of businesses in which companies such as the then British South African Company, the British East India Company and so on were at the forefront of the colonization process. So, the danger is that foreign business investors in fact come to Africa as foreign appropriators and colonisers. The motives of foreign transnational corporations are not necessarily to invest but to appropriate African resources including the current transnational corporations-led land grabbing on the continent (Nhemachena, 2017). In addition to this, the foreign investors in the form of Western transnational corporations are coming in to grab African land and then grow GMO crops [deceptively names climate smart agriculture] which Africans are then force-fed with, but under the banner of ‘humanitarianism’ (Mawere and Nhemachena, 2017).

Ambassador Mubi (Principal Director in the Zimbabwean Department of Public Affairs and Knowledge Management) believes

that the work by the OPC is critical to improve policy coherence, better use of resources, promote and capitalize on synergies and innovations from a multi-stakeholder perspective and provide seamless service delivery to citizens and business (The Herald Business, April 21-17).

Valuable in efforts to evade GMOs is the recent efficacy in Zimbabwean revenue generation that could enable the country to avoid 'humanitarian' aid in the form of GMOs. For instance in the first quarter of 2017, Zimbabwe Revenue Authority surpassed its target of revenue collection by 6.09% (The Herald, May 2017). This is quite commendable and would significantly help the government to meet its social security obligations to citizens. Any deliberate efforts to plug off all loopholes on all leakages due to corrupt tendencies would go a long way in ensuring that the revenues intended are all directed at the fiscus and not corrupt individuals. The plugging of the loopholes would also guarantee confidence among the citizens of the civil service.

Africa also needs to come up with a facility that capacitates depressed [indigenous] companies that help produce indigenous food crops that support struggles for food sovereignty. Indigenous companies need to be given support so that they continue to operate. Agricultural production sectors are the engines of African economies and so it is futile to allow foreign transnational corporations to operate and dominate even in such agricultural production sectors where local or indigenous industries should not only operate but also dominate. The productive sector is arguably the engine for successful economies.

Africa also needs to engage in joint ventures which will undoubtedly give the local companies the impetus to spring to greater levels: local or indigenous companies in agriculture- including seed production, food processing and so on need to be supported by the government as a strategy to evade GMOs. With such support, the local indigenous companies would claim a considerable market share. This is evidenced by a statement from Aurex (a subsidiary of the Reserve Bank of Zimbabwe) who had this to say:

Our negotiations with a technical partner, which are supported by the Reserve Bank of Zimbabwe (the sole shareholder of Aurex) are basically to get foothold into the international market with our products. There are a lot of dynamics in the international markets where you need intimate knowledge of those markets. Coming from nowhere it can be very difficult to find your foot (The Herald Business April 25, 2017).

GMO Hypocrisy

The question in the minds of many is whether ‘food’ is ‘food’ or genetically modified organisms are in fact a form of warfare meant to sabotage Africa in future years as the West did as far back as 1884 when Africa was partitioned in what was known as the Scramble of Africa. The circulation, by the West, of GMOs could actually be a way to ensure that Africans are gradually eliminated from the earth through consumption of toxins. The idea in the circulation of GMOs is for the West to induce genetic modifications so that [Pan] African identities are eliminated since Pan Africanism is a threat to Western hegemony.

Marking the hypocrisy of the West is the EU Research Directorate in 2001 which claimed that research on GM plants and derived products so far developed and marketed, has not shown any risk or possibility of any risk on human health or the environment (European Union, 2010; Zepeda *et al*, 2013). Notwithstanding this assertion, what is surprising is that countries that produce GMOs spiritedly resist consuming the GMOs which they paradoxically force Africans to eat (Mawere and Nhemachena, 2017). This is hypocrisy which shows the insincerity of their assertions about the safety of GMOs, which Africans are encouraged, by these countries, to consume.

In the same vein, in December 2002, the French Academy of Science stated that the criticisms against GMOs could actually be set aside since scientifically research had not sustained any views contrary to the claims that GMOs are safe for Africa and indeed everyone else (Lombard, 21 June 2007). But as noted above, the EU

including France which is a member has paradoxically banned the growing of GMOs in their own jurisdictions.

The French Academy of Medicine also made the same pronouncement into the public domain that their expertise had not secured any evidence regarding health problems whose genesis were GMO products (Lombard, 21 June 2007). This followed research in some countries where the GMO products had been consumed for a considerable number of years. Again we need to ask if this is not hypocrisy given the fact that the growing of GMOs has been banned in EU jurisdiction. An interesting historical fact with the same logic is that in colonial Africa including Zimbabwe colonists killed more of African cattle [than their own] after alleging that there was an anthrax outbreak (Chitiyo, 2004; Mutowo, 2001). When they claim that GMOs are safe for Africans to eat while paradoxically at the same time banning the GMOs in their own jurisdictions, is this not hypocrisy repeated the umpteenth time so that more Africans can eat and die believing the hypocritical gospel of GMO safety?

If GMOs are safe then the uptake of GMOs should have been more in the West than anywhere else in the world. Why the West declares the safety of GMOs and then proceeds to shun the same GMOs is cause for concern in Africa.

Therefore, the fears that have gripped Africa are not misplaced because today Africa is experiencing many allergies, cancers and chronic toxic effects that were unknown to Africa in the past. These diseases could be a result of the kinds of unsafe foods that Africans are increasingly consuming.

The hypocrisy of the West in promoting GMOs is exposed by the fact that in the year 2000 some private European buyers stopped importing beef from Namibia, amid allegations that their herd had been fed with GMO maize from the RSA (Van Der Walt, 2000 cited in Paarlberg, 2001).

Paradoxically, Zimbabwean Scientists led by Professor Idah Sithole –Niang, a University of Zimbabwe biochemist researcher, are advocating for the embracement of the genetically modified crops. Their argument is that this technology has the capacity to scientifically boost yields, incomes and improve the livelihoods of the people of Zimbabwe (Sunday Mail, November 20, 2016). But the

question is, toxic as they are and shunned by their Western producers as they have been; how can GMOs improve the livelihoods of the Africans? Why do the Western producers of the GMOs not also want improvements, supposedly resulting from GMOs, to their livelihoods? Why not improve livelihoods through organic farming which is also ideal for African small-scale farmers who do not need to be forced to buy GMO seeds from Monsanto as is planned? Is the attendant loss of autonomy and sovereignty over indigenous seeds and crops to GMO producing biotechnology corporations such as Monsanto an improvement?

The history of plunder through legitimisation that came from the Berlin Conference calls for attention to continuing plunder including of bio-piracy connected to biotechnology in Africa. Even today the West is fighting to maintain a strangle-hold on Africa so that they can still enjoy what Africa has to offer, predominantly diamonds, gold, tantalite, prime agricultural land and many other resources which could confirm that the campaign on the increased uptake of GMOs is insincere and meant to adversely affect Africa, such that Africans are slowly wiped away from the continent whose resources are coveted by the West.

The sadism of the West which can be easily replicated through GMOs [as biological weapons] is witnessed by many conflicts and disasters, for which the West has had a hand, in Africa. An example could be the conflict in Zaire, now Democratic Republic of Congo, which started as early as the 1960s and has not been resolved to date. History has it that this conflict actually led to the death of Dag Hammarskjöld (then UN Deputy Secretary General) who perished in a plane crash while flying from Zambia to Zaire where he had been working hard to ensure peace in the then Zaire (Global Research, 5 August 2016; The New York Times, 6 September 2016). These conflicts have also caused a lot of infrastructural destruction which has also caused the fall in productive sectors of the African economies. The question in the minds of many is the sincerity of the West in bringing this food with one hand while their Western military-industrial complex fuels conflicts and the attendant deaths of Africans on the other hand. The question is, might all this not be global execution of Neo-Malthusianism in which Africans are

expected to die via wars as well as from diseases originating from consuming GMOs?

The fact that Westerners with vested interests in the GMO industry are unlikely to disclose the real toxic effects of GMOs is supported by the point that the evils of partitioning Africa were not made known to the affected Africans at the time of the partition. Even the evils of colonialism were not disclosed by the West [including by some missionaries who chose to also trick Africans into signing off treaties with the empire] to Africans at the time of colonization. Because they could currently be on another mission in the context of the current new scramble for Africa, contemporary missionaries, including academics who have become secular evangelists of (neo-)imperial gospels (Nyamnjoh, 2012), are therefore unlikely to disclose the real toxic effects of GMOs to affected impoverished Africans.

Conclusion

In the light of the foregoing, we conclude by pointing out the fact that food security is inadequate without the corollary and more important aspects which are food and national sovereignty. Security without sovereignty is inconceivable in a risky world characterised by global apartheid which threatens Africans with apartheid style food poisoning. Arguably what is needed is to have food sovereignty first and foremost and then security second. In a global capitalist world which is marked by competition for resources as well as maximisation of profits, it would be naïve to dispense with sovereignty and uncritically believe that global capitalism exists to provide security for the impoverished and for those that volunteer their sovereignty away. To compete, one has to have sovereignty and autonomy; otherwise to bank on mere security without sovereignty guarantees vulnerability not only to the vicissitudes of the global food market but also to the tempests of those that control and monopolize global food systems. In this vein, Africa does not require genetic modification; rather the continent requires sovereignty and autonomy over its resources, land, minerals and so on. If sovereignty and autonomy over one's resources did not matter as a primary concern, Westerners and their

corporations would not be bothering about owning and controlling not only their own resources, in the global north, but the resources of Africans as well. The fact that the westerners worry more about owning and controlling their own resources in the global north [as well as colonially looted resources in the global south] means that Africa will have its priorities wrong if it privileges global food security over food and national sovereignty. The West would be happy if African priorities are not right precisely because having its priorities wrong rules Africa out of competition for ownership and control of resources with the Westerners. Privileging food security over food sovereignty would be, for Africa, putting the cart before the [culinary] horse and this explains why Africa has failed to develop including after independence-the priorities have not been put right.

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Appraising Polarity Views towards Genetically Modified Foods in Nigeria

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Introduction

The challenges of food insecurity are a brazing issue in African countries, especially Nigeria. Nigeria saw it as a matter of need for food security and food availability, prompting her to introduce biotechnology in the genetic modification of plants, in food production, and within the shores of Nigeria. This led to the appearance of genetically modified foods (GMFs) in both the agricultural sector and the market.

Historically, the introduction GMFs is shrouded with controversies of epic proportions based on food safety, food sovereignty, ethnic and religious sectarian views. The chapter seeks to make a critical appraisal of the thought and teachings of the various religious sects in Nigeria towards GMFs, looking at the pros and cons of GMFs towards enhancing food security in and the health implications to human consumption. The methodology used for this chapter was Historical and multidisciplinary analysis method complemented with secondary sources. The major finding of the chapter is that while GMF has been presented as the way out of food insecurity in Nigeria, some groups and religions urged the government to impose a ban on GMFs in Nigeria.

This chapter underlines the need to recognise challenges such as religious beliefs, ethnic/sectarian beliefs, lack of awareness, inadequate training, low levels of education and poor extension services, among others, in introducing GMFs technology to resource farmers in Nigeria. It is a well-known fact that Africa, and Nigeria in particular, has abundance of arable land, and should never have contemplated of food shortage. It is arguable that the farmers are not necessarily poor but are impoverished by (neo-)colonial

expropriations and appropriation. There are heated debates on whether Africa only need mere food security or it also needs food sovereignty. The chapter concludes that failure to address the religious and ethnic conceptions of GMFs will impede the adoption of GM technology in Nigeria and Africa in general.

Definition of Concepts

Genetic Engineering

This can be seen as the practical use of technology and techniques which allows the formation of organisms with new traits, which in favourable conditions may pass from laboratories and food factories to environment. Genetic engineering can create plants with the exact desired trait very rapidly with great accuracy, and has revolutionary potential in agriculture, for it allows one to design a plant to one's desire. In this way, it may seem entirely different from previously existing agricultural technologies. However, humans have practiced selective breeding for thousands of years (Fernandez and McBride, 2006). One aspect of genetic engineering which has been used for centuries is the selective breeding of crop plants and farm animals to produce improved food (Okonko, Olabode, Okeleji, 2006). Clearly, genetic engineering is merely a refined version of selective breeding, just another step in the long tradition of improvements in agriculture. The only real difference between the two methods is the possibility in genetic engineering of mixing genes between species (Webber, 2002). Genetic engineering offers a way to quickly improve crop characteristics such as yield, resistance or herbicide tolerance to a degree not often possible with traditional methods.

Food Security

This is defined as existing when all people at all times have access to sufficient, safe, nutritious food to maintain a healthy and active life. Food security is also defined as including both physical and economic access to food that meets people's dietary needs as well as their food preferences. Individual who are food secure do not live in hunger or fear of starvation.

Food Sovereignty on the other hand translate food security and involves availability of food, the appropriate use based on knowledge of basic nutrition and care, as well as adequate water and sanitation. It entails the quantity and quality of food that reaches members of the household. In order to achieve food Sovereignty, the food ingested must be safe and must be enough to meet the physiological requirements of each individual.

The application of biotechnology in the genetic modification of plants in food production has led to the appearance of genetically modified foods (GMFs) in the marketplace. From inception, the subject of GMFs has been controversial. The use of biotechnology to enhance nutritional value has raised a number of fundamental questions about genetically modified foods or plants all over the world. In some developed nations of the world like USA, Canada, Japan, UK, there has been a divergent opinion on the acceptability of GMFs (Hickey, Mittal 2003). While some countries with USA as the major champion are in support of the production of genetically modified products as a way out of food insecurity ravaging the world, particularly sub-Saharan Africa, most other countries of Europe like Spain, Germany, even Japan are of the opinion that the modified genetics of the products have side effects to the consumers and as such should be condemned and rejected.

The GMFs controversy is a dispute over the relative advantages and disadvantages of GMF crops and other uses of genetically-modified organisms in food production. The dispute involves biotechnology companies, governmental regulators, non-governmental organizations and scientists (Ibiam and Okoi, 2012). In Nigeria, ethnicity and religious beliefs played out in the controversies surrounding the introduction of GMFs in the country. The dispute is most intense in Japan and Europe, where public concern about GM food is higher than in other parts of the world such as the United States. In the United States, GM crops are more widely grown and the introduction of these products has been less controversial (USACGMP, 2009).

The signing of MOU by the US and Nigerian governments in 2004, which saw the penetration of GMFs products into the Nigerian shores sparked up hot debates and controversies in Nigeria which

polarized the issue of GMF in the country. The five key areas of controversy related to genetically engineered food are food safety, the effect on natural ecosystems, and gene flow into non GE crops, moral/religious concerns, and corporate control of the food supply (USACGMP, 2009).

While it is evident that there is a food supply issue in Nigeria and other developing countries of the world, the question is whether GM food can solve hunger problems by ensuring food security and sovereignty without jeopardizing the health and environmental status of the Nigerian consumer, or even if that would be the best way to address the issue. Genetic engineering offers a way to quickly improve crop characteristics such as yield, resistance or herbicide tolerance to a degree not often possible with traditional methods. GMFs can be manipulated to produce completely artificial substances, from the precursors to plastics to consumable vaccines. They are developed and marketed because there are some perceived advantages either to the producer or consumer of these foods (IFPRI, 2006).

However, the production of GMF raises the possibility of human health, environmental and economic problems, including unanticipated allergic responses to novel substances in foods, the spread of pest resistance or herbicide tolerance to wild plants, inadvertent toxicity to benign wildlife, and increasing control of agriculture by biotechnology corporations.

Historical Overview of Genetically Modified Foods

The advent of GMFs came with the birth of genetic engineering⁵. In the 1960s, a lot of breakthroughs were recorded in the field of genetics. It was proven that this new knowledge had the potential to revolutionize food production, thus creating huge benefits for the world (Hammer, 2003). By 1972, another scientific breakthrough was recorded by Paul Berg, who joined together DNA from two different organisms, to create the first recombinant DNA molecule (Griffiths, 2002). This breakthrough was followed by a pioneer study in which Stanley Cohen and Robert Boyer inserted DNA from an African clawed toad into the *Escherichia coli* bacterium (IFST, 2004). Shortly,

after then, some companies realized that this fledging technology could open up new highly profitable markets.

The first field trial of genetically modified organism was in 1986 when Frost ban, a spray containing genetically modified bacteria was sprayed over strawberry crops to protect them from frost damage (Environmental news network, 2006). Frost ban was designed to stop the growth of other bacteria that catalyse the formation of ice. In 1992, a Supreme Court ruling in the United States made the patenting of life-forms of genetically modified foods legal (Batalion, 2006). Following this, the first genetically engineered products became available in the US markets in 1994. The Flavr Savr tomato that had been gene-altered for longer shelf-life and milk from dairy cows injected with recombinant Bovine Growth Hormone (rBGH or rBST) causing them to produce more milk were two of the first GMFs available to consumers. In the case of the slow-ripening Flavr Savr™, scientists knew that a type of enzyme causes tomatoes to soften as they ripen. When they isolated the gene responsible for the softening enzyme and inserted it backwards into the tomato's genetic code, the resulting tomato maintained good eating quality for a longer time than regular tomatoes (Okonko, Olabode, Okeleji, 2006). Hence the Flavr Savr™ tomato was genetically engineered to keep it firm for a long period of time and it was a big hit with the consumers. Calgene, the company that produced the genetically modified tomato was overcome by a flawed business plan and the Flavr Savr™ tomato eventually disappeared from supermarket shelves. Despite this, the Flavr Savr tomato helped the United States consumers to accept genetically modified foods (Fernandez and McBride, 2006). By the year 2000, as much as 75% of the foods in American supermarkets had ingredients from GE crops. Such foods include cereals, baby foods, corn and soy products, cooking oils, squash and tomatoes.

In addition to the use of biotechnology in the production of GM crops, the technique was also used to create genetically modified animals (Okonko, Olabode, Okeleji, 2006). But a development of this application was slow due to the greater difficulties in animal genetic engineering and to the social and ethical concerns of consumers about the animal food applications of biotechnology. Nevertheless,

some genetically modified food animals are under consideration for approval and marketing. An example is a salmon that grows to marketable size more rapidly than regular salmon (Okonko, Olabode, Okeleji, 2006). Most GM animal research is for medical applications, as in the case of the cloned sheep “Dolly”, where scientists are investigating cystic fibrosis disease (Tietjen, McGough and Kurzynske: 2000, BREI, 2006).

Today, GM foods are common, especially in Argentina, Brazil, Canada, China and the United States (Rauch, 2005). In many parts of the world, farmers have embraced genetically modified crops so enthusiastically that the global area of genetically modified crops has been increasing. In 2004, Nigeria signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the United States government agreeing to support GM crops. Since then, Nigeria has been a recipient of food aid from countries like the United States, that are renowned for producing genetically modified foods which they believed will cushion the effect of food insecurity in Nigeria.

Food Security in Nigeria

According to The World Food Summit of 1996, food security is defined as existing “when all people at all times have access to sufficient, safe, nutritious food to maintain a healthy and active life” (FAO, 1996). Food security is also defined as including both physical and economic access to food that meets people's dietary needs as well as their food preferences. Individual who are food secure do not live in hunger or fear of starvation. Food insecurity on the other hand, is a situation of limited or uncertain availability of nutritionally adequate and safe foods or limited or uncertain ability to acquire acceptable food in socially acceptable ways (WHO, 2009). In many countries such as Nigeria, issues pertaining to insurgency, militancy, communal clashes leading to high number of Internally Displaced persons (IDPs), health problems related to dietary excess or insufficiency are an ever increasing threat to food security.

According to the WHO (2009) world summit on food security, it states that there are four pillars of food security which are food availability, access, utilisation, and stability.

Food Availability

Food availability relates to the supply of food through production, distribution and exchange. Food production is determined by a variety of factors including land ownership and use; soil management; crop selection, breeding, and management; livestock breeding and management; and harvesting. Nations don't have to have the natural resources required to produce crops in order to achieve food security, as seen in the examples of Japan and Singapore. Because food consumers outnumber producers in every country, food must be distributed to different regions or nations. Food distribution involves the storage, processing, transport, packaging, and marketing of food. Poor transport infrastructure can increase the price of supplying water and fertilizer as well as the price of moving food to national and global markets. Around the world, few individuals or households are continuously self-reliant for food. This creates the need for a bartering, exchange, or cash economy to acquire food. The exchange of food requires efficient trading systems and market institutions, which can have an impact on food security.

Food Accessibility

It refers to the affordability and allocation of food, as well as the preferences of individuals and households. The UN Committee on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights noted that the causes of hunger and malnutrition are often not a scarcity of food but an inability to access available food, usually due to poverty. Poverty can limit access to food, and can also increase how vulnerable an individual or household is to food price spikes. Access depends on whether the household has enough income to purchase food at prevailing prices or has sufficient land and other resources to grow its own food. Households with enough resources can overcome unstable harvests and local food shortages and maintain their access to food. Access to food must be available in socially acceptable ways, without, for example, resorting to emergency food supplies, scavenging, stealing, or other coping strategies. There are two distinct types of access to food: direct access in which a household produces

food using human and material resources and economic access in which household purchase foods produce elsewhere.

Food Use

Appropriate use based on knowledge of basic nutrition and care, as well as adequate water and sanitation. It refers to the metabolism of food by individuals. Once food is obtained by a household, a variety of factors impact the quantity and quality of food that reaches members of the household. In order to achieve food security, the food ingested must be safe and must be enough to meet the physiological requirements of each individual.

Food security is a complex sustainable development issue, linked to health through malnutrition, but also to sustainable economic development, environment, and trade. Issues such as whether households or communities get enough food, how it is distributed within the household or communities and whether that food fulfils the nutrition needs of all members of the household/community, show that food security is clearly linked to health and development. Household food security exists when all members, at all times, have access to enough food for an active, healthy life. The United Nations (UN) recognized the Right to food in the Declaration of Human Rights in 1948, and has since noted that it is vital for the enjoyment of all other rights. Food insecurity, on the other hand, is a situation of “limited or uncertain availability of nutritionally adequate and safe foods or limited or uncertain ability to acquire acceptable foods in socially acceptable ways”, according to the United State Department of Agriculture (2002).

Sources of GMFs in Nigeria

Genetically modified foods (GMFs) are most commonly used to refer to crop plants created for human or animal consumption using the latest molecular biology techniques (Taire, 2006). These plants have been modified in the laboratory to enhance desired traits such as increased resistance to herbicides or improved nutritional content (Whitman, 2000). The enhancement of desired traits has traditionally been undertaken through breeding, but conventional plant breeding

methods can be very time consuming and are often not very accurate. Genetic engineering, on the other hand, can create plants with the exact desired trait very rapidly with great accuracy (Whitman, 2000). Genetically modified products include medicines and vaccines, foods and food ingredients, feeds and fibres.

Before the oil boom, Nigeria was generating foreign exchange from crops like cocoa, kola, groundnut etc. and farming was a major factor part of production in the country. The oil boom saw agriculture decline over the years, leaving every citizen to depend on annual budget based on oil sales and depending on day-to-day expenditure based on the parallel market (Omenazu, 2005). Presently, Nigerian agriculture is facing the growing encroachment of urbanization, industrial expansion, and an expanding transport infrastructure. Deforestation and cultivation in fragile ecosystems is also leading to soil degradation (Oluwatuyi, 2004). Consequent upon these challenges on agriculture, Nigeria imports a lot of things especially food from other countries.

An investigation carried out by Environmental Rights Action/Friends of the Earth (2003) on the potential presence of GM ingredients in Nigeria has found food aid as one of the potential channels. Nigeria is in principle not a food aid recipient, but continues to receive rice from the United States as food aid. In 2003, Nigeria received 11,000.6 metric tons of soy meal as food aid from the US Food for Progress programme (Watch, 2005). Taking into account that over 80% of soy beans in the US are genetically modified, it is therefore likely that Nigeria has been receiving GMFs without prior information to the government and the people (ERA, 2003).

Another source of potential introduction of GMF is through commercial imports of food containing ingredients from corn and soy. It has been reported that China may release genetically modified rice into the market in 2006 (ERA, 2003). With the bulk of rice consumed in Nigeria coming from Asia, it is a matter of time before genetically modified rice from China floods Nigerian markets.

The International Institute for Tropical Agriculture (IITA) in Ibadan, Nigeria is making efforts to prevent the outbreak of virulent Cassava Mosaic Disease in Nigeria, which could lead to food

shortages in the country (Dixon, 2006). GM cassava was created at the Donald Danforth Centre in St. Louis, United States and sent to Nigeria for experimentation through IITA. This raises the issue of using Africa as experimental grounds for western harmful products. However, the application to test the GM cassava was withdrawn by IITA due to its failure to achieve the required resistance to cassava mosaic disease and the pressure put on the Nigeria government to resist using Nigeria as an experimental ground.

The genetic modification of foods makes excellent economic sense for the major agribusiness and food corporations and has been strongly backed by them. Some of the biggest names in the food business openly use genetically modified components, while others will not disclose whether they use them or not. Such companies include Arnotts, Cadburys, Coca-Cola, Coles and Woolworths' house brands, Golden Circle and Nestle (Peter, 2003). Nigeria, maybe due to pressure by the MNCs and USA government, has drafted a biosafety bill to allowing the use of GMF technology in the country, but the National legislature is yet to pass it into law owing to the fear and concerns about the country's lack of capacity to test for GMOs and not necessarily the law. The law does not necessarily ensure safety but it is how and whether and when you implement it. Also it is suspected that the major TNCs behind GMOs will leave adequate room for African governments to freely test and possibly reject GMOs, because they are the ones who fund the African laboratories where the testing is done, and provide funds via donations to African governments. In America there are concerns about scientists who are manipulated to produce results favourable to the big biotech corporations. In that regards Nigerian governments and scientists don't have the adequate freedom to test and ensure safety given their desperation. The country also does not have any policy on the importation of GMF, unlike some African nations such as Angola, Ethiopia, Kenya, Lesotho and Zambia, which have banned the import of GMFs.

Polarity and Religious Sectarian Views against GMFs in Nigeria

While it is evident that there are food supply and food security issues in Nigeria, the question is whether GM food can solve Nigeria hunger problems, or even if that would be the best way to address the issue. Several scientists argue that in order to meet the demand for food in the developing world, a second green revolution with increased use of GM crops is needed (Ruskin, 2003). Others argue that there is more than enough food in the world and that the hunger crisis is caused by problems in food distribution and politics, not production (Lappe, 1998; Boucher, 1999). It has been widely noted that there are those who consider over-population the real issue here, and that food production is adequate for any reasonable population size.

There is lots of controversy surrounding the use of GM technology in production of GMFs in Nigeria, particularly with regard to environment and health risk, which still poses a big challenge to adoption of the new technology around Nigeria. The lack of scientific capacity to regulate and release GM crops to farmers represents a significant challenge in Nigeria and other African countries (Adenle, 2013). One wonders which regulatory authority in Nigeria has scientific capacity to test and conduct risk analysis of GM products, and demonstrate it as safe for human consumption and less harmful to the environment.

The United States has been the one championing and drumming support for GMOs on grounds that it is safe, can resist diseases better and would bring about adequate food supply for countries facing food scarcity, and has been forcing it down Nigeria's throat to adopt GMFs. There is a general notion that the US government will not permit any food product into the market if stringent controls are not applied. However, with all the technologies and apparatus at her disposal, genetically modified food has become difficult for the US regulatory agencies to regulate, let alone Nigeria that anything can go. On the other hand, the European Union criticizes GMOs and wants them kept out of their market (NIPS, 2010).

Some religious leaders in Nigeria, both Muslims and Christians are of the view that the danger of genetically modified food to the health and the environment surpasses the advantages. Those that stand to gain are the multinational biotech companies, controlling food supply around the world and they will eventually force the local farmers out of the market. WWF Switzerland Research has identified that toxins emanating from GMOs have been found in maternal and fetal blood. The DNAs of GMOs can be passed to humans that consume them. Gluten disorder has been connected to GMOs and 18 million Americans suffer from this disorder. America is the highest producer of GMOs and 60% to 70% of processed food contains GMOs. GMO corn has also been linked to rat tumours. Glyphosate, a toxin found in GMO is linked to many diseases and ailments; birth defects, autism, Parkinson, Alzheimer, breast cancer, and more. Compounds found in GMO can trigger early puberty, cause thyroid problem and infertility (WWF, 2003). The risk assessment done on genetically modified food is scientifically insufficient to guaranty food safety.

In 2010, there was an attempt to sponsor a Biosafety Bill at the Nigeria National Assembly to be passed into law, but because of the polarity and sectarian views against the Bill, it has not been passed into law. The Bill seeks to usher in but restrict genetically modified food into Nigeria. However, the MNCs are kicking against the non-passage of the Bill, threatening to withdraw their aid and investment if such Bill is passed into law. Multinational biotech companies like Syngenta, Monsanto and DuPont have all shown interest in investing in Nigeria. This sounds like a brilliant idea but these big biotech multinational companies which are in control of the world food supply also have hidden agendas. They own patents of some GMOs. The local farmers and biotech companies may subsequently be driven out of the market.

The Nigerian Institute of Advanced Legal Studies has come out to openly condemn the introduction of GMOs in Nigeria. In a communique made available, the body through Nkechi Quintine-Amiator, Research Fellow II stated that with the introduction of the Bill, the Nigerian government obviously recognizes the danger GMOs pose and is still bent on introducing it. This should be given

a second thought. It is worrying that the government is in such a hurry to introduce GMOs when countries like Japan, New-Zealand, Germany etc. strongly oppose it and in most cases have out rightly banned GMOs from entering their country. They concluded by saying that:

We do not know about GMO to consider it safe for the consumption of Nigerians. It seems too complex and complicated for Nigeria. It just seems like a wild experiment that Nigeria is delving into. The introduction of GMO into Nigerian and the Biosafety Bill is uncalled for. It is over zealotry on the part of the government and the law makers. The bill is a joke in the wake of overwhelming scientific research and findings on the dangers of GMO. The Agricultural sector can still contribute to the growth of the economy by sticking to organic food (NIPA).

Moreover, there have been several attacks and destructions on hectares of farm in the Northern parts of Nigeria by some religious fanatics where they believed that GM crops are cultivated, in some cases, herdsmen will use their cattle and feed on the GM crops without any resistance, while in other instances, the farms and warehouse are set ablaze. Some of these vandals are armed and enjoyed the support of prominent religious leaders in the place. They believe that artificially modifying crops are against the will of Allah. According to one Imam in an interview conducted by the researcher, quoting a section of the Quran said that whatever Allah has created must not be changed or modified (Amin *et al*, 2011).

Furthermore, factors such as cultural and spiritual basis had played an important role in the decision to accept GMO in Nigeria which needs careful consideration in policy development (Solari, 2008). During the interviews in the course of this research we specifically ask respondents whether religion would influence their decisions in accepting GM crops or not. Some of the Nigerian Christians and Muslims that were interviewed suggested that religion and culture might affect illiterate farmers' decision in accepting GM crops in the rural locations.

Therefore, low level of education among farmers could undermine the adoption of new technology in the light of technical training required to grow GM crops in Nigeria. For example, almost 70% of farmers in northern Nigeria who produce most of the foods consume in the country have no basic formal education such as primary or secondary school leaving certificate. The lack of basic formal education among farmers could be a serious challenge in introducing GMFs in the country. Some of these farmers are claiming that they were told in Mosque during Jummat prayers that the white is introducing the GMOs to reduce their population by rendering them impotent through the consumption of the GM products.

Conclusion

The chapter looked at the introduction of GMFs in Nigeria, and how this had generated divergent opinion on the acceptability or rejection of these new products in the country. The main apprehension of GMO opponents is focused on the health of consumers. Genetically modified food is responsible for the development of food allergies, resistance to antibiotics and synthesis of toxic substances. The appearance of risks associated with a broad use of GMOs provides the basis for criticism from the side of biotechnology opponents.

Those pushing for the introduction of GM technology and policymakers should not assume that Nigeria will welcome such without any objection, and that GMFs will start making immediate impact without emphasizing underlying constraints and what need to be done to overcome these constraints before Nigeria farmers most of them with low formal educational background, can adopt and enjoy the benefits of the new technology.

Since GMF has found its way into Nigeria, there is need for caution. Presently, there is no law governing the production of food products by companies using genetically modified ingredients. There are many challenges ahead for the government, especially in the areas of safety testing, regulation and internal policy. Moreover, every citizen has a right to know what he is consuming. There is a need to enlighten the general public on what GMFs are, highlighting the

advantages and disadvantages of accepting them as a source of food. It is our opinion that GMFs may not be the ultimate solution to food security and food sovereignty in Nigeria.

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Mental Colonialism, Skin Bleaching, and the African Denial of the Self: Interrogating Skin Bleaching and Make-up among African Women

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Mentality almost invariably leads many Africans to prefer European things-values, practices, institutions, and so on-even if a closer look might suggest that the equivalent African 'thing' is of comparable worth (Kwame Gyekye 1988).

Introduction

The harrowing legacy of colonialism and the towering ghost of psychological imperialism appendaged by the gory effects of modernity and globalisation have haunted the people of Africa since the advent of colonialism and even the trans-Atlantic slave trade. In fact, the trans-Atlantic slave trade and colonialism have instilled in Africans not only the abiding spirit of inferiority complex but also the psychological demon of self-denial which both manifest themselves in various spheres of the African lives. Hitherto, the well-calculated and complex system of colonialism that stretched for over a century in some African countries such as South Africa, Mozambique and Zimbabwe admittedly succeeded in misconstruing and misleading the Africans into believing that they are second-class citizens to the 'so-called' superior 'white' race. As such, the majority of Africans especially women in both rural and urban areas have developed a chronic syndrome of competing in mimicking Western identities – mannerism, dressing, eating habits and so on –, thus, denying their own unique and diversified God-given identities.

Using Africa as a case study, this chapter problematises the perpetuation of what we refer to as mental colonisation and its attendant self-denial of African identities through self-decoration and the uncritical use and consumption of skin bleaching substances. The

chapter then proffers the argument that the hidden and yet far reaching motivation for skin bleaching that include colonial thinking, epistemic racism and subsequent inferiority complex are all serious problems haunting Africa, especially the African women. Colonial thinking and its racist epistemology prescribed a model of beauty that equates beauty with whiteness among Africans. This model downplayed and castigated to the periphery the African concept of beauty, to the extent of substituting the once cherished African beauty as encoded in the phrase “Black is beauty”. Unfortunately, African women also developed an inferiority complex that resulted in psychological dislike of their chocolate skin, which they were deceived to believe is black. Black (sometimes commonly referred to as dark) skin is also mistakenly associated with poverty and backwardness by African women themselves prompting them to use artificial substances on their skins. These artificial substances which come in different types and packages are mainly produced from the West and the Americas and destined for Africa and other so-called developing countries which, through colonialism and globalisation, have been taught to replicate, mirror and resemble their former colonial masters through the many years of colonial and neo-colonial experiences.

In view of the above, this chapter interrogates African identities and the African consumption of skin bleaching substances as they engage in mimicry in the name of globalisation and modernity. On this note, the chapter advances the argument that God did not make a mistake in creating a world characterised by a diversity of races. Why then do some Africans, through skin bleaching and consumption of foreign hair, seek to distort their God-given nature?

Through critical questioning and careful examination of foreign substances, this chapter argues for decolonial thinking and liberation of the mindset among African women. It is our thinking that this liberation will not only free African women of colonial thinking but also help to curb the global production and consumption of the dangerous skin bleaching substances. On the same note, the chapter defends an African conception of beauty that is based on the African epistemological paradigm that accommodates diversity of thought

from multiple indigenous African cultures and that restores confidence on the so-called black skin.

Taking the highlighted argument further, we warn that Africa needs to wake up to world power dynamics and machinations to determine its own destiny. This can only be possible if Africans dig deep into their existential labyrinths, love their identities, promote and perpetuate their unique identities instead of shunning them in preference to foreign [Western] identities. Having articulated the background to skin bleaching by African women and the central argument of this chapter, the ensuing section interrogates the concept of skin bleaching per se.

Interrogating Skin Bleaching

Definitionally, skin bleaching is the use of homemade concoctions, cosmetic and dermatological products to remove the melanin or pigment from a person's skin over time (Charles 2010a; Hunter 2011; Jablonski 2006). In the same vein, Pichte *et al* (2004) define skin bleaching as a process where different cosmetics are regularly applied to the skin with the primary intention of lightening the skin over time. Similarly, Lewis *et al* (2011:1) also define skin bleaching as “the application of topical creams, serums, gels, sticks, soaps, cleansers, lotions and household products to the skin” for the purpose of obtaining a lighter skin hue. Besides the afore-mentioned items, tablets and injections are also used as some of the agents that hasten the skin bleaching process (Fihlani 2012; Charles 2010a; 2010b). Thus generally speaking, skin bleaching entails the practice of using chemical substances in an attempt to lighten one's skin or providing an even skin complexion by reducing the melanin concentration in the skin.

As alluded to above, a variety of concoctions and chemical mixtures are used to obtain the desired skin hue. Moreover, the term skin bleaching is often used interchangeably with other terms such as skin ‘lightening’, ‘brightening’, ‘whitening’ and ‘softening’ (Fritsch 2011; McClintock 1995). For purposes of this chapter, these terms will be used interchangeably to express the same idea.

One important thing to note is that the process of skin bleaching/skin lightening is usually undertaken by an individual deliberately. That is, people consciously and intentionally use topical creams, pills and injections among many other skin bleaching products to lighten their skin. There are a number of chemicals used in skin bleaching. Some of these are: hydroquinone, mercury, lactic acid, gel, kojic acid, arbutin, shea butter, topical retinoids, corticosteroids, alpha-arbutin, niacinamide, azelaic acid, sodium lactate, magnesium ascorbyl phosphate and botanicals. Some of the bleaching/skin lightening creams include: 2 % vitamin c body cream with MSM, Illuminatural 6i, dermatology skin brightener, obagi nu-derm clear, retin A gel 0.1 %, rephase D-white, meladerm skin lightening cream, revitol skin lightening cream, 0.5 retinol face serum, and 5 % hydroquinone kligman's formula body cream.

It is axiomatic that skin bleaching is an ancient phenomenon which has been practiced by women from different nationalities, ethnic and racial groups around the world for different reasons and in varying ways and degrees since time immemorial (Charles 2010a; Hunter 2011; Jablonski 2006). These same sentiments are shared and echoed by Hall (2013), Naidoo *et al* (2016) and Couteau and Coiffard (2016) who strongly assert that skin bleaching is a practice that is prevalent in many human societies across the world. This obtaining reality aptly shows that the quest for beauty and beautiful skin is a global phenomenon which besides knowing and respecting no boundaries, extends across race, sex, and all human age groups.

In light of the above, it is crucial to underline that the practice of skin bleaching has been adopted by people of different countries in both the global north and south, though since the colonial times African people seem to have been the most affected of all societies of the world. While it is important to acknowledge that women are the major consumers of the various skin bleaching substances, historical and even contemporary archives are replete with rampant evidence showing the involvement of men who also yearn to achieve the so-called "whiteness" of the global north. Notwithstanding this, the present chapter focusses on African women for the major reason that these are the most affected and targeted group of people by the contemporary skin bleaching industry (Nchimbi 2005). This is in

conformity with the World Health Organisation-WHO's (2014) report which shows that women from Africa, the Middle East, Asia and Latin America are by and large the most frequent users of skin bleaching products. To be more precise, the WHO report furthered to note that the practice of skin bleaching exists prominently amongst dark-skinned populations across the globe with 25%-95% of women in sub-Saharan Africa using skin bleaching products (WHO 2014). A recent study by the University of Cape Town suggested that one woman in three in South Africa bleaches her skin for the major reason of wanting to attain "white skin" (BBC, 1 Jan 2013). It is in concordance of these alarming statistical revelations that scholars like Blay (2011) notes that skin bleaching is nothing less than a way of life in Africa. She arrived at this conclusion in view of her findings that the majority of African female population in countries such as Nigeria, Senegal, Ghana, South Africa, Tanzania, Zambia, Mali and Zimbabwe, among many others, use skin bleaching products to lighten their skin. The WHO has reported that Nigerians are the highest users of skin bleaching products with 77 % of their women claimed to use skin bleaching substances, followed by Togo (59 %), South Africa (35 %) and then Mali (25 %) (BBC 1 Jan 2013).

While many people in Africa continue relying heavily on skin bleaching, research has shown that this is not without healthy problems and other such side effects. One South African dermatologist, Dr Noora Moti-Joosub, for example, confessed to the BBC having seen more and more patients whose skin has been irreversibly damaged, thus:

I am getting patients from all over Africa needing help with treating their ochronosis (skin damage). There is very little we can do to reverse the damage and yet people are still in denial about the side-effects of these products (Ibid).

Expressing the same concern, another dermatologist, Dr. Davids noted:

Very few people in South Africa and Africa know the concentration of the toxic compounds that are contained in the

products on the black market and that is concerning. We need to do more to educate people about these dangerous products (Ibid).

The fact that skin bleaching substances have side effects cannot therefore be overemphasised. Besides ochronosis, skin bleaching substances other side effects such as skin cancer, liver damage, hyperpigmentation, thinning of the skin, skin irritations, skin infections, kidney damage, skin rashes, depression, anxiety, damage of the peripheral nerves, cutaneous diseases (unevenness or discolouration), inflammatory pigmentations (dark spots caused by injury or inflammation to the skin), and melasma (discoloured patches). Most of these side-effects are a result of very harsh (poisonous) substances which are present, in varying amounts, in all of the skin bleaching products namely, hydroquinone and mercury, among others.

Now that we have defined the term skin bleaching, the following section focuses on the historical development of the concept across the globe. It achieves this by tracing the history of skin bleaching from enslavement, colonialism and global white supremacy politically and ideologically in an endeavour to situate the global practice of skin bleaching in a broader socio-historical context before confirming the discussion to the African context.

Navigating the History of Skin Bleaching

Throughout history, among different groups of people, and in various places around the globe, people have created various skin lightening creams and powders in order to attain brighter skin tones. It is important to note right from the onset that there is no known universally accepted history of the development of the practice of skin bleaching. As will be explained in the ensuing paragraphs, skin bleaching is a sporadic practice which mushroomed from different ideological backgrounds while propelled and stimulated by different motivations. In Europe for instance, it emerged as a result of the quest to be unique, enhance and fantasise beauty. In North America, Africa and other European colonies for example, it emanated as a result of the stereotyping of the dark skin

by the cocaisionians, that is, the so-called “whites”. In the light of this understanding, we trace the known historical genesis of the concept of skin bleaching in patches and stiches, most especially because the development of the practice did not follow a clearly defined path but instead, occurred in a multifaceted way.

In the Western world, the practice of skin bleaching has been documented as far back as the times of the Ancient Greeks (Mire 2000) in which people were already using white lead to bleach their skin (Blay 2009a; 2011). In concordance with this line of thinking, scholars such as Amgborale (2011), Peiss (1998), and Williams (1957) posit that the history of skin bleaching can be traced back to the Elizabethan Era (1558-1603) in which people were using powders and paint to make their skin appear extremely pale and ghostly white. Thus, according to this school of thought, the practice of skin bleaching is believed to have started in Europe among the Europeans themselves.

Apart from that, scholars such as Charles (2003; 2009) and Lewis *et al* (2010) acknowledge that enslavement, colonialism and contemporary white supremacy are the chief instigators and drivers of the skin bleaching phenomenon especially among Africans. In agreement with this line of thinking, Dukor (2010a: 160), argues that “racism, slavery and colonialism gave rise to the African psychological and cultural alienation which ultimately gave rise to the self-denial of African identity”. In the same vein, Ruch and Anyanwu (1981), postulate that the Whites considered Africans as inferior people incapable of reasoning as exemplified by Kant in one of his writings when he exclaimed that “I saw a man who was black from head to toe, a clear testimony that all what he uttered was nonsense”. Ruch and Anyanwu go further asserting that because of the stereotyping of the back skin and the many negatives associated with the black skin, the Africans were erroneously made to believe that white colour is superior to black colour. On this basis, Africans were considered racially inferior and culturally uncivilised hence, they were subjected to slavery by both the Arabs and Europeans (Dukor 2010a).

Moreover, other scholars such as Shepherd (2000) believe that the practice of skin bleaching started during the 1700s in the

Caribbean Plantations. What happened is that enslaved African women working on plantations were sometimes preyed on by their white masters. Since children born out of such intersexual engagements were light in complexion, they were given preferential and favourable treatment over the dark skinned ones (Ibid). In fact, they were called “mulatto” which generally means the light skinned ones.

As a result of the above state of affairs, the “mulatto” were promoted as higher quality stock on the auction block because of the existence of the perceived superior “white blood” in their bodies (Ibid). This engineered internalised oppressive behaviour between the two groups. The dark skinned enslaved Africans were made to suffer hard labour in the field, from sun up to sun down while the light skinned ones enjoyed preferential treatment in the house (Ibid). In an endeavour to avoid harsh treatment as well as to get favourable treatment, the dark skinned people started to bleach their skin to attain the social status preserved for the light skinned ones. Corroborating the above noted point, Hunter (2007); Miller (1969, 1973) and Smith (1990) argue that the perceived ugliness of black skin in Jamaica is a legacy of plantation slavery and British colonialism where the “inferior” African physicality was denigrated and the “superior” British physicality elevated.

Glenn (2008) further notes that the practice of skin bleaching spread from Europe to America during the 1800s. In America, skin bleaching was practiced mainly by Africans Americans. By the mid-1900s, the practice was also adopted by African countries such as South Africa (Ibid). However, the establishment of the cosmetic industry at the end of the nineteenth century and into the beginning of the twentieth century witnessed a significant rise in the use of skin bleaching products especially among middle white class women living in Europe and North America (Ibid). The practice later on infiltrated to none white people who used skin bleaching products to remove blemishes, pimples and dark spots from their skins (Mire 2000; Pierre 2008). The 1920s saw black American and South African women becoming ‘new target groups’ for skin bleaching products. During that time, America was the main producer of skin bleaching products and most of the people who owned such businesses were

black people. The skin bleaching products were used by blacks to raise their racial status (Lynn 2009). By the 1950s the market for skin bleaching products had gone beyond the boundaries of South Africa and had expanded to thirteen African countries or colonies (Peterson 2003; Lynn 2009).

The particular enthusiasm for skin whitening agents originated in the 1960s, driven by the incidental discovery of the whitening action of hydroquinone on the black skins of American workers working in the rubber industry. From the 1980s onwards, a blooming interest in skin-whitening cosmetics was observed and lighter complexion was synonymous with beauty in different cultures. This fondness, motivated by complex social, cultural, and historical factors, has not slowed down since then (Chaudhri and Jain 2009; Ashikari 2005).

The historical context shows that the issue of skin bleaching is a part of a deeper problem of self-hatred and inferiority complex that is all a part of a bigger problem, which is white supremacy. The themes of the “west is the best” and “white is right” represent a psychopathological stream of consciousness and a Euro-centred perspective, skin bleaching/lightening is a by-product of this (Ajani 2011). Psychoanalyst, writer, and philosopher, Franz Fanon (1952: 8) notes with concern that “as a result of the inferiority complex engendered in the mind of the Black Subject, he will try to appropriate and imitate the cultural code of the coloniser”. The behaviour, Fanon further asserts, “is even more evident in upwardly mobile and educated Black people who can afford to acquire status symbols” (p.9).

He went further asserting that, “Always black never fully human, no matter how much educated you have and how you act.” Further to this. Fanon asserts the “black man has to escape the association of blackness with evil by donning white masks” (Ibid). From the foregoing, skin bleaching then represents one attempt to approximate the white ideal and consequently gain access to both the humanity and social status historically reserved for whites (Blay 2011). The effects of white supremacy and colonialism have resulted in peoples of black African decent associating whiteness with beauty and success (Ibid).

From the preceding discussion, one important thing on which researchers and scholars agree is that skin bleaching is probably the consequence of history (Verma 2010). Slavery, as well as colonialism in Africa and other parts of the world, caused dark skinned individuals to believe that they were inferior to the light skinned people. As Verma tells us, this phenomenon has its roots in the caste system in which the light skinned people were at the top of the social ladder while the darker skinned people occupied the lower social level/ class (Ibid). Since the knowledge about the history of skin bleaching has been forged, the next step is to explore the reasons that motivate women (and sometimes men) to bleach their skin.

Skin Bleaching Motivations: Mental Colonialism and Self Denial

Studies carried out across the globe have so far revealed several divergent reasons for skin bleaching. This section aims to examine some of the reasons that push and pull African women to bleach their skin. More specifically, the section unpacks some of the reasons that motivate women to engage in skin bleaching practices.

Some research studies have attributed motives for engaging in skin bleaching to conceptions of beauty including such things as measures of attractiveness to the opposite sex, wanting to seem more beautiful (Charles 2009; Lewis *et al.*, 2011) as well as to remove facial imperfections such as spots or pimples (Hamed *et al.*, 2010; Lewis *et al.*, 2011; Charles 2009; Menke 2002; Pierre 2008). Other reasons noted range from colonial mentality to inferiority complex (Hall 1995; Charles 2009; Blay 2007; 2011) and finally some motivations behind the practice have been attributed to achieving higher social class and benefits within a homogenous population (Lewis *et al.*, 2011; Kpanake *et al.*, 2010).

As noted above, numerous assumptions attempt to account for skin bleaching especially among populations with histories of colonial subjection and imperial dominance. Skin bleaching, in the eyes of many commentators, reflects a desire to “de-Africanise” oneself due to a negative African/Black self-concept and further represents an attempt to emulate whites. In Japan for instance, there is an old proverb that says “white skin makes up for seven defects”

(Wagatsuma 1967: 407). The proverb, in highlighting the importance and the value placed on white skin, shows that white skin is so attractive and powerful that it causes one to overlook the absence of other attractive physical characteristics. Similarly, in China, there is an idiom which says “one white covers up three uglinesses” (Bray 2002: 1). As that may, the words ‘fair’ and ‘beauty’ are synonymous in India (Franklin 1968; Hall 1995). This influenced Blay (2011:6) to argue that, “the historical institutions of colonialism and enslavement, including ongoing worldwide white supremacy, are the leading and responsible reasons for skin lightening”. As a global power structure, white supremacy, as Blay (2011:6-7) further argues, “preserves and protects a system of wealth, power, and privilege”. In other words, whiteness comes with privileges and benefits. From the position of privileges and benefits, it is socially and psychologically understandable why one would pursue skin lightening as a way to upgrade one’s social standing.

It is worth noting that this psychological projection happens unconsciously, which skin lightening product users may deny. Blay (2011:7-8) insightfully notes that “most individuals who bleach their skin vehemently reject accusations that they desire to be white because they are aware that no amount of chemical intervention will actually render them white”. Accordingly, there is a clear but complex connection between the legacy of worldwide white hegemony and the present-day global skin lightening phenomenon. For instance, as Blay (2011:20) notes, “whiteness as the explicit ideal and the feminine aesthetic ideal in Europe, has had an impact on women of all races and cultures, and has led to the cosmetic efforts of skin lightening”.

Coming nearer home to Africa, research carried out in Tanzania and Ghana (Blay 2011:23) reveals that, “women who had bleached their skins claimed that they did so in order to remove pimples, rashes and skin diseases; to have a soft skin; to be white, beautiful (and more European looking); to satisfy one’s partner or attract mates of the opposite sex; to impress or satisfy peers; and to feel clean and fresh”. However, such reasons seem to point directly to an aspiration to get the approval of others and to be seen as beautiful, using frameworks and criteria for beauty that replicate Eurocentric beauty paradigms.

Apart from that, media influences, historical legacies and other reasons are posited as possible reasons for the skin bleaching phenomenon. Regardless of the motive behind an individual's desire to bleach, it is clear that it is a complex phenomenon. Slavery and colonialism promoted the ideas of white superiority and black inferiority (racism) through much of the Western world. Jordan (1968: 7) described the initial English confrontation with Africans and stated, "white and black connoted purity and filthiness, virginity and sin, virtue and baseness, beauty and ugliness, beneficence and evil, God and the devil". These oppositional associations conjure up very vivid images of good versus bad and continue on even today. Being white continues to signify wealth; being brown initiates perceptions of privilege while being black, initiates the opposite perception-one of poverty and negativity. Further, these negative connotations may lead to feelings of inferiority and internalised self-deprecation (Ibid).

As far as the skin bleaching epidemic is concerned, many journalists and researchers, including Fihlani (2012), have argued that the "European thing" that Africans who bleach their skin prefer is a white skin colour. Gyekye (1997) says it all when he notes "mentality almost invariably leads many Africans to prefer European things-values, practices, institutions, and so on-even if a closer look might suggest that the equivalent African 'thing' is of comparable worth" (p. 27). Thus, skin bleaching is considered as one of the most egregious attacks on African identity and dignity. In other words, skin bleaching is driven by low self-esteem and, to some degree self-denial. The Congolese hair stylist, Jackson Marcelle, who uses special injection to bleach his skin reinforces this idea when he confesses:

I pray every day and I ask God, 'God why did you make me black?' I don't like being black. I don't like black skin...I like white people. Black people are seen as dangerous; that's why I don't like being black. People treat me better now because I look like I am white (BBC 1 Jan 2013).

This is in recognition of the fact that ever since the encounter of Africans and Europeans in general, black skin has always been stigmatised while light skin has always been celebrated. According to Hall (2017), the bleaching syndrome has three components. In the

first place, it is psychological, involving the adoption of alien ideals and the rejection of indigenous characteristics. African-American psychologists, Kenneth and Mamie Clark, conducted a famous “doll study” in the 1940s that examines the degree of racial awareness and attitudes of black school children (Ibid). Kenneth and Clark wanted to investigate the degree to which black children would make selections preferring a stimulus representing a black individual to one representing a white person. Their study showed how black children as young as five come to understand their place in the world as “less than”. Lamentably, children reach this conclusion long before they are have the ability to articulate race. This idea that dark skin is “less than” gets reinforced daily on television, in advertisements and through other forms of mass media (Ibid). Second, the bleaching syndrome is also sociological. This means that it affects group behaviour in line with these ideals. The fact that black rappers systematically select light-skinned women to model in their videos is a good popular example of this. The final aspect of the bleaching syndrome is psychological. Here individual psychology and group behaviour eventually lead to the attention of the skin colour (Ibid).

It is important to note that Biko’s seminal political philosophy of *Black Consciousness* as well as Ngugi wa Thiongo’s *Decolonising the mind* are still relevant and perhaps more relevant now than ever, especially considering the alarming rate at which Africans are mimicking Western identities through skin bleaching. It seeks to infuse the black community with a new-found pride in themselves, their efforts, their value systems, their culture, their religion and their outlook to life (Biko 1978). Thus, Black Consciousness is an awareness of the meaning of one’s blackness and an acceptance of the demand to view and interpret the world from the standpoint of this self-consciousness.

Biko further argues that colonialism played a legitimatising role in helping to cement a slave-mentality and self-alienation in the collective consciousness of black people. This created an inferiority complex in black people and a spirit of self-denial. Africans need to wake up and guard against all stereotypes directed to them, and to realise the potency of their God given identity as a people. In light of this advice to the African people, we advance that skin bleaching

tantamount to playing God. This resonates with Uzochukw's (6 May 2017) observation that:

In life, some men and women are not happy the way nature made them. Because of this reason, they work hard to tell God that He made a mistake in their skin colour when He was creating them and that pushes them into the consumption of bleaching, whitening or body lightening creams.

In other words, Africa has a very special and unique identity which must be recovered, nurtured and celebrated.

From an Afrocentric perspective, people who bleach their skins suffer from self-hate, a result of the lingering psychological scars of slavery and colonialism. Interestingly, while addressing the United Nations General Assembly in New York, Selassie (1963) Emperor of Ethiopia, passionately addressed the issue of racial discrimination. Although this address was made almost 54 years ago, it still rings true for the African continent as well as people of the African Diaspora throughout the world today. He thus, argues that:

Until the philosophy which holds one race superior and another inferior is finally and permanently discredited and abandoned. That until there are no longer first-class and second-class citizens of any nation. That until the colour of a man's skin is of no more significance than the colour of his eyes. That until the basic human rights are equally guaranteed to all without regard to race. That until that day, the dream of lasting peace and world citizenship and the rule of international morality will remain but a fleeting illusion, to be pursued but never attained... Until that day, the African continent will not know peace. We Africans will fight, if necessary and we know that we shall win, as we are confident in the victory of good over evil (p.7).

In addition, Dr. Martin Luther King Junior's famous 'I Have a Dream' speech spoke to the significance of skin colour. He stated, "I have a dream that my four little children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the colour of their skin but by the

content of their character” (King 1963, para. 14). This resonates with Biko’s (1978: 31) argument that:

The first step therefore is to make the black man come to himself; to pump life into his empty shell; to infuse him with pride and dignity, to remind him of his complicity in the crime of allowing himself to be misused and therefore letting evil reign supreme in the country of his birth.

Biko was calling on black people to take control of their wellbeing by restoring pride and dignity to blackness. He was also asking black people to resist the dominating colonial power that was overtaking black Africans.

It is important to note that skin lightening robs the dark-skinned people of Africa of their God-given identity. In fact, it makes them feel psychologically inferior and desire to exit black skin and metamorphose to white skin (Tenai 2016). This is arguably worsened by possible existing after-effects of colonialism of the dark-skinned people by white people, which creates a sense of inferiority and a desire on the part of the dark-skinned to be like the white coloniser (Ibid). This dissatisfaction particularly pertains to dark skin, hence the desire to change one’s dark skin to light skin through skin bleaching.

Theologically this mind set undermines people’s unique image of God. Stated differently, the desire to alter the Craftsman’s (God) perfect hand by exiting, weakening, and diluting one’s skin colour, suggests doubt and dissatisfaction of the perfection of God (Ibid). In other words, this undermines the aesthetics of each individual. In view of this, it is imperative to cultivate a constructive and affirming view of oneself that is informed by a thorough understanding of the perfectum and aesthetics of created human beings. Such an approach fosters wholeness, positive image and contributes to appreciation of the Creator (Ibid). Moreover, there is no apparent value attached to skin colour in the Bible. However, Koslofsky (2014: 795) comments that “theologically all human bodies share a single origin in creation and a single descent from Adam, Eve, and Noah”.

It is fundamental to note that in medieval Europe and America, early Christian moralists likened face painting to idolatry (Blay 2011; Peiss 1998). As such, women were urged to abstain from all sorts of artifice in order to pursue integrity, wholesomeness, sexual chastity and natural beauty (Blay 2011). Interestingly, the initial popular perceptions in Europe and in the USA were that women who painted their faces were prostitutes who did so as a way to advertise their immoral business. Men who whitened their skins were equal recipients of scathing criticism, including accusations that they were giving in to an emptiness that was common amongst women (Ibid). As such, both men and women who whitened their skins went to great lengths to hide their actions, in order to circumvent open mockery.

In a similar manner, as Tuma (2010) and Blay (2011) point out, the practice of skin lightening in Africa has generally attracted public disapproval. In particular instances, it was associated with commercial sex workers. Some media houses in Africa portray women who lighten their skins as uninformed, ill-advised and susceptible, whilst others even censure and mocked them (Blay 2011). Additionally, others classify the skin lightening practice as representing low self-esteem, self-hate and as an enduring shadow of the colonial legacy. In other instances, skin lightening is seen as representing the moral character and the inner strength of those who engage in the practice. Skin lightening is also seen in other situations as representing an insult to the dignity of the black race in general and the African in particular, and those who bleach their skins are accused of betraying their cultures (Ibid).

In view of the preceding discussion, it is evident that Africa has become a proverbial dumping ground for skin bleaching chemicals deemed unfit for white bodies. Most of these skin bleaching products are manufactured in Europe and Asia, places where the active ingredients have been banned. Banned from use, not manufacture. Resultantly, we may not be wrong in arguing that it seems then that the skin bleaching products are made specifically for Africans.

Conclusion

This chapter revolves around key issues pertaining to the root causes and effects of skin bleaching, especially the psychological signals embedded in such actions. The chapter argues that the legacy of enslavement, colonialism and post-colonialism are far more resilient than envisaged and anticipated as is reflected by rampant evidence of people of African descent shunning their God given identities. Yet, in view of the findings yielded in this chapter, we conclude that there are several reasons that motivate people to bleach their skin namely: a) to raise their socio-economic status; b) to look attractive; c) because they enjoyed their light coloured skin; d) because skin bleaching was fashionable; and e) because black colour is ugly. We have, however, underlined that skin bleaching by African women should be understood as a form of mental colonialism and self-denial. It is from this understanding that the chapter has argued loudly that the time for radical psychological transformation and re-orientation of the African disoriented and misinformed mind-set is now ripe and more urgent than before. This is peremptory given that skin bleaching has a long history rooted in Africa's past encounter with the outside world particularly, Europe and the Americas. The same also holds on account of the fact that the imposition of Western cultural values through slavery and colonialism as well as the perpetuation of racialism in both print and electronic mass medias has ultimately led Africans to develop an inferiority complex which subsequently instilled in them the belief that black skin is ugly. It has been the underlying argument of this chapter, therefore, that as a result of the historic and systematic unfair treatment of "black" people through enslavement and colonialism, the black people have lamentably developed contempt for being black and thus, sought to be "white" through skin bleaching. This prompts the need to instil in the African communities, a sense of self-awareness, self-pride and self-sufficiency.

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Despite sustained continental and national struggles for autonomy, sovereignty and independence in postcolonial Africa, the continent is increasingly embattled by the forces of globalisation which threaten African identity that is at the core of African struggles for continental and national unity. Situating the debates in the contemporary discourses on decoloniality, global consumerism, global food apartheid and the challenges and prospects of the emergent sharing economies, this book critically examines the importation, use and implications of genetically modified organisms (GMOs) and other such non-food products on African bodies, institutions and cultures. The book poses questions about how Africa can be decolonised both politically and in terms of global food apartheid and the dehumanising importation and use of “foreign” non-food products, some of which militate against the ethos of [African] identity, Renaissance and indigeneity. On note, the book urges the African continent to ensure the safety of imports ensuing from the global flows and circulations that are mired in the resilient invisible global matrices of power.

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